

Sudanese have nothing to fear — UAE

ABU DHABI (R) — Sudanese in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are not at risk because of the expulsions of diplomats by the two countries, a UAE government official said Monday. "Under UAE government policy people are never held responsible for the acts of their governments," said the official, who did not wish to be named. The UAE Sunday ordered Sudanese diplomats, including the ambassador, to leave the country after Khartoum announced it was expelling the UAE's ambassador to Sudan and two other diplomats. The row was triggered by Sudanese accusations of mistreatment of its citizens in the UAE. Relations between Sudan and the UAE soured during the Gulf crisis because of Khartoum's pro-Iraqi stance. "The Sudanese media spread malicious lies about the mistreatment of the Sudanese individuals in the country and have constantly fabricated... stories about unlawful arrests and intimidations of Sudanese," said a Foreign Ministry official. Sudanese diplomats had taken part in "undesirable activities that harm relations between the two countries," the UAE's WAM news agency reported.

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'U.N. doctor's murder was planned'

NAIROBI (R) — A United Nations envoy said on Monday that the weekend murder by masked gunmen of a U.N. doctor in northern Somalia was planned. "They went there to murder. Unquestionably it was planned," U.N. Under-Secretary-General James Jonah told reporters in Nairobi after a three-day peace mission to war-torn Somalia. U.N. officials said Dr. Marinka Pampalova, a 51-year-old Bulgarian paediatrician working for the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), was killed and three people were wounded when three gunmen in battle dress opened fire on them in the port of Bossaso. One of the wounded, a Somali doctor, was flown to a hospital in neighbouring Djibouti but was so badly injured he was not expected to survive, they said. Earlier reports from New York said he was killed. "This could do great harm to the people of Somalia," Mr. Jonah said of the shooting. He was visiting the north of the state in the Horn of Africa when the shooting took place and brought Dr. Pampalova's body back to Nairobi in his aircraft.

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Dumas due in Israel for talks

TEL AVIV (R) — French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas is due in Israel this week for consultations on Middle East peace negotiations, an Israeli foreign ministry spokesman said Monday. Mr. Dumas will meet Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Defence Minister Moshe Arens and leading opposition Labour Party chief Shimon Peres during a three-day visit beginning on Wednesday. The French foreign minister earlier visited Lebanon and Jordan. France has so far played a limited role in the peace talks. The 12-nation European Community sent only an observer to the Oct. 30 peace conference in Madrid. The EC is expected to play an active role in multilateral talks on arms control, water and other regional concerns due to take place in Moscow at the end of the month.

Saleh assures Yemenis on border talks

SANAA (R) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh Monday told his people a border issue with neighbouring Oman would soon be solved. A row broke out in Yemen last month over suspicions that the government was about to sign away 15,000 square kilometres of territory to Oman before a new constitution took full effect. Mr. Saleh told Radio Sanaa the government was committed to "solve the border issue with its neighbour within the framework of both parties' historical and legal rights." The president, who said last month the two countries would sign a formal order demarcation agreement before the end of 1991, told the radio negotiations with Oman were still going on. Political parties and organisations in the northeastern border province of Al Mahra, which would be affected by the deal, said in a joint statement last month a draft order agreement included the territorial concession.

Leader denies he old British Muslims a break law

LONDON (R) — The leader of a self-styled Islamic parliament tried to defuse a row among British Muslims on Monday by denying he had told them to break laws they found unacceptable. "We would not break the law. We are amongst the most law-abiding people in this country," Kalim Siddiqui said on Independent Television News. The 50-year-old leader of the Islamic Centre in London said last week when he opened the new parliament, which he said was elected by the Muslim community, that he would "oppose, and if necessary defy, any public policy or legislation that we regard as inimical to our interests." Most other British Muslim leaders distanced themselves from Mr. Siddiqui and the new parliament. Iqbal Sacranie, spokesman for the U.K. Action Committee on Islamic Affairs, which says it represents 90 per cent of Britain's Muslims, said he was glad Mr. Siddiqui had rejected his statements. "We have the same rights and responsibilities as any other group and there is no question of us being separated into a separate group," he said.

Jordan mediates Iran-Iraq sanctions talks — Bashir

LONDON (R) — Sudan is trying to assist Iran's help in lifting Western economic sanctions against Iraq, Sudanese President Nasser Hassan Al Bashir said. There is mediation. We are passing the points of view of the two sides to each other," Lieutenant-General Bashir told the London-based Arab-language daily Al-Jazeera Al Arabi. "Sudan is against the blockade," Gen. Bashir said. Middle East experts in London said that although Tehran might support removal of the sanctions on Iraq, it was unlikely to do so. The paper quoted diplomatic sources as saying Sudan would mediate talks between Iraq and Iran over Iraqi aircraft shot down by Tehran as reparation for losses during their 1980-88 war.

Fate of peace talks hinges on U.N. action

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter with agency dispatches

AMMAN — The fate of Arab-Israeli peace talks hung on the balance Monday with all eyes set on United Nations Security Council action, possibly a condemnation resolution, over Israel's decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

While inter-Arab consultations continued in the Middle East, the Security Council was scheduled to begin informal meetings at 2100 GMT Monday. No resolution had been drafted and diplomats expected formal work to gather pace late Monday.

Reports from New York indicated that the United States, which has "strongly condemned" the Israeli expulsion decision, would go along with a mild-toned resolution restricted in language to the latest Israeli move rather than a sweeping denunciation of its ally, whom it has steadfastly supported with its veto power in the council over the years.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat returned to Amman Monday evening after a quick visit to Damascus where he held talks with Syrian President Hafez Al

Assad.

The Arab delegations — Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese — have postponed their departures to Washington to the scheduled Jan. 7 talks in protest against the Israeli expulsion decision. The Israeli negotiating team arrived in Washington Monday evening.

Most diplomatic sources and observers expected the impasse to be over if the Security Council issues a resolution strong enough to be acceptable to the Arabs but mild enough not to antagonise the Israelis.

"I'd say we'd be unhappy" if a condemnation resolution was endorsed by the Security Council, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir was quoted as telling reporters after an Israeli parliament session.

The comment of Mr. Shamir, who usually uses strong language to warn the international community against condemning Israel for its practices in the occupied territories, was taken to mean that the Jewish state was prepared to accept an American veto in favour of Security Council voting in favour of the expulsions.

Faisal Hussein, the overall

leader of the Palestinian team which is attending the peace process in a joint delegation with Jordan, arrived in Amman Monday. But his arrival did not signal a Palestinian preparation to depart for Washington, since Palestinian officials said he was preparing for a lecture tour of Europe and the Far East.

Palestinian delegates in the occupied territories were quoted as saying that the impasse was a test of Israeli intentions and seriousness towards addressing the crisis of the Middle East conflict — Palestinian rights, including the right to set up an independent state in land now occupied by Israel.

"At this time there is no decision to boycott the talks or withdraw from the talks," Hanan Ashrawi, a spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, told reporters Sunday.

Mr. Hussein said a decision on whether to take part in the next round of peace talks would be influenced by the Security Council resolution, Israel's reaction to it and the United States' stance during the council's session last Monday.

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Egypt: Peace process will not survive if Israeli actions persist

CAIRO (Agencies) — Foreign Minister Amr Musa warned Monday of serious repercussions if Israel scuttles the Middle East peace process through acts like expelling Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Arabs scheduled to resume bilateral peace talks with Israel on Tuesday delayed leaving the region for Washington to protest Israel's decision to expel 12 Palestinian activists from the occupied territories.

"I warn, I say that the peace process will not survive such violations one after the other," Mr. Musa said in a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) interview.

"I warn that one or two or three actions like that Israeli violation of law and order and the spirit of peace will negatively affect the peace process," he said. "The repercussions will be very serious for everybody."

"We are interested in the continuation of the peace process," Mr. Musa told the BBC.

"If some circles in Israel think

that once the peace process is over, then they will have the occupied territories for themselves, safe and secure, they are mistaken."

Mr. Musa said Israel must make peace with its Arab neighbours if it wants to "coexist in peace and benefit from peaceful relations. Israel stands to gain a lot from peace and to lose if peace is not achieved."

Egypt is the only Arab state to have made peace with Israel. They signed their U.S.-brokered treaty in 1979.

'Israel creating timebomb'

An advisor to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat said Monday Israel was creating a timebomb in the occupied territories by allowing Jewish settlers to carry arms.

"The decision by Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens to arm Jewish settlers in the occupied territories... is part of a plan aiming at a collective massacre of Palestinians," Mr. Bassam Abu Sharif told a news conference.

Deputies dissatisfied with secret briefing on peace negotiations

By Mariam M. Shahin

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A closed-door briefing on the Middle East peace process given to the Lower House of Parliament by Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber Sunday evening failed to give any special insight into the workings of the peace process and where it is headed, several deputies said Monday.

"It was an unsatisfactory meeting," said one Balqa deputy. "We were briefed on things that are general knowledge, things we can read about in any newspaper, there was absolutely nothing new," said the deputy, who preferred anonymity.

Another Democratic Bloc deputy said that everything that the foreign minister said in his 1/2 hour briefing was "known by every journalist."

Deputies bombarded Dr. Abu Jaber with questions concerning the future of the peace process, particularly the multilateral phase.

"There were many questions about why Jordan should consider attending the multilateral discussions before Israel agrees that the basis for the bilateral negotiations is the principle of land for peace," said one Constitution Bloc deputy.

Parliamentary sources also said that there were major reservations about how Israel would deal with the Palestinian delegation in a separate capacity. The basic issue of Palestinian political rights should be comprehensively addressed by the Israelis before Jordan accepts normalised relations with the Jewish

state, they said.

"Why should we normalise relations if we have no basis for an agreement?" asked one Pan-Arab deputy.

Another added: "We hope for a dialogue before new policies are made, not after."

Deputies reported that there was a great deal of opposition to the session being held behind closed doors.

"A lot of us felt that all that was being said should be said in public; the people have the right to know," said a member of the Democratic Bloc.

Some deputies felt that there seemed to be an attempt to keep the deputies' comments on Jordan's foreign policy vis-a-vis the peace process from the public.

"It seemed as if it was not what the foreign minister had to say that was being kept from the press and the public — because it was all common knowledge — but rather the criticism of Jordan's foreign policy that was being voiced by the deputies," said one deputy.

Members of the 22-deputy Muslim Brotherhood Bloc reiterated their opposition to the on-going peace process while some Pan-Arabists also voiced their stand against the talks.

Many of the questions posed to the foreign minister were left unanswered, deputies said, and a follow-up session is expected to take place next Wednesday.

"Hopefully the meeting will be open to the public," said one deputy opposed to the closed-door session.

U.S. to support U.N. vote condemning Israeli expulsions

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States said on Monday it would support a U.N. resolution condemning Israel for its plan to expel Palestinian activists — a move which could pave the way for a resumption of Middle East peace talks.

The talks were to have resumed in Washington Tuesday but Arab delegations suspended their travel plans to protest at Israel's decision last week to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Israeli negotiators arrived in Washington Monday. The United States strongly condemned the expulsion orders last week. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Monday it would vote for a United Nations Security Council resolution along the same lines.

"We're talking to other members of the council about a proposed resolution in keeping with our own long-standing and oft-stated opposition to deportations," said Mr. Boucher.

"As you know, we never say finally what we will support until we see it. But yes, we will support a resolution if it is consistent with our views on the subject of deportations," he said.

Middle East diplomats said Washington wanted a simple resolution that condemned the deportations but was resisting Arab pressure for a more generalised condemnation of Israeli policies.

The vote on the resolution could come on Monday night. Middle East diplomats said its passage could persuade the Palestinians and other Arab negotiators to come to Washington and resume talks with Israel by Wednesday or Thursday.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir on Monday defended the expulsion policy as necessary to deter "terrorism" and said foreign condemnations would soon die down.

Arafat returns after talks in Damascus

AMMAN (J.T.) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat returned to Amman from Damascus Monday after a short visit to Syria.

Mr. Arafat will continue consultations with Jordanian leaders on the latest developments in the peace process and the situation in the occupied Arab territories. Mr. Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), was received at the airport by Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister Ali Suheimat and Palestinian ambassador to Jordan Al Tayyeb Abdul Rahim.

In Damascus, Mr. Arafat discussed with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad Israel's ruling to expel 12 Palestinians, which Mr. Arafat called a "crime."

The meeting came the day before the scheduled resumption of Middle East peace talks in Washington, threatened by a possible Arab boycott if the Israeli decision is not reversed.

Arab negotiators have postponed their trip to Washington until further notice. Israeli negotiators proceeded to Washington Monday.

Mr. Arafat thanked Syria for its stance and stressed "the importance of coordination among Arab delegations to confront the Israeli intransigence."

Before leaving Damascus airport, Mr. Arafat told reporters that Israel's expulsion order was "a crime against the rights of the Palestinians."

He said the Arabs should withhold from Israel something it wants — participation in multilateral regional talks before guarantees of return of the Israeli-occupied territory.

"Israel and the U.S. are trying to speed up the talks, but a stern Arab position should be formed before entering the multilateral talks," Mr. Arafat said.

The Israelis are keen to discuss regional issues at the so-called

multilateral talks — such as scarce water resources, arms control and an end to the Arab economic embargo of Israel.

The Syrians had little to say about the Assad-Arafat talks beyond a presidential palace statement that: "Both sides have stressed the importance of coordination and cooperation between the Arab parties involved in the peace talks."

Mr. Arafat was welcomed on arrival in Damascus by Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam.

The official Tishreen daily hailed Arabs' collective decision to delay the departure of their delegations.

"The postponement was a national common stand against Israel's attempts to provoke Arabs and challenge the world and international laws," Tishreen said.

"Syria which affirms its commitment to peace will continue to stress that the protection of the Arab rights could not be achieved without the achievement of a comprehensive solution," the paper said.

Saudi call on U.N.

In Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal called Monday for the U.N. Security Council to halt Israeli practices such as the expulsion of Palestinians from the occupied territories.

"The Arab participants in the peace talks proved their commitment and sincere preparedness to pursue negotiations aimed at establishing the will of peace," said the minister in presence of his Syrian counterpart, Farouk Al Sharrar.

"Regrettably, this has been met with Israeli intransigence and attempts to abort the peace process," he said.

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Law on moneychangers goes to House floor with amendments

By P.V. Vivekanand

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The ground has been set for the much-awaited resumption of free-market foreign exchange operations in Jordan following the review Monday of a related draft law by the Legal Committee of the Lower House.

The draft law, with certain amendments suggested by the committee, goes before the full House Wednesday and parliamentary sources expect no major hurdle before it is endorsed by the deputies.

"We have completed work on draft law and sent it to the House," said one committee member who preferred anonymity. "We hope that the law will be endorsed by the House after incorporating the amendments that we have proposed."

The legislation, which replaces an earlier law on moneychangers, was warranted after the government, then headed by Prime Minister Zeid Rifai, closed down the 68 private exchange houses in the Kingdom in February 1989.

Bank accounts and assets of the moneychangers were seized by the authorities pend-

ing scrutiny by government-appointed auditors prior to liquidation.

The closure order did not affect the currency exchange operations conducted by commercial banks.

The government accused the moneychangers of speculating in the national currency and going beyond the licensed functions of changing currencies by accepting deposits and issuing cheques for transfers abroad in violation of regulations set by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ).

According to sources familiar with the government investigations, several of the exchange houses were precariously perched with their operations after having lost heavily through speculation.

However, CBJ Governor Mohammad Saeed Nabulsi, who guided the Kingdom's monetary status back to track after the collapse of the dinar in 1988, has expressed the opinion that "the role of the moneychangers was exaggerated in the crisis" and that the restoration of free-market moneychanging operations could yield positive effects on the economy.

The opinion of a leading moneychanger was: "The country had 68 moneychanging houses, which were taxed and controlled by the government. But after the (Feb. 8, 1989) closure, you had countless numbers acting as moneychangers."

The reference was to the street-side "exchangers" who cluster around certain areas in downtown Amman offering to buy or sell foreign currency at black market rates.

The law that now goes before the Lower House stipulates that new licences will be issued to moneychangers on a case-by-case basis (regardless of whether the applicant used to operate an exchange house on Feb. 8, 1989).

The CBJ will scrutinise the applications and determine the capital under three categories which was changed by the House Legal Committee to JD250,000, JD500,000 and JD1,000,000 from JD300,000, JD1,000,000 and JD2,000,000 suggested in the original draft sent to Parliament by the government.

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Complaints will not change Algerian vote

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Complaints of cheating in Algeria's general election will make little difference to the commanding lead seized by Islamic fundamentalists in the first round, a source close to the investigating body said Monday.

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), committed to making the country an Islamic state, took 188 of the 232 seats decided outright last month.

Complaints, mainly from losing parties, challenged voting procedures in 145 constituencies and provoked widespread speculation that dozens of winning candidates could lose their seat and have to fight again.

The independent Al Watan newspaper on Monday, quoting a "well-informed source," said some 30 results had already been reportedly scrapped "to the detri-

ment of FIS candidates elected in certain constituencies."

But the source close to the investigating body said the Constitutional Council, the supreme electoral supervisor, had "received very few complaints contesting elected candidates."

The FIS and the former ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), which won 16 seats in the first round after the council upgraded the figure from 15, are to fight most of the remaining 198 undecided seats on Jan. 16.

The source, quoted by the Algerian news agency APS, said the council was currently carefully examining void votes cast in the first round. Nearly one million votes were declared void.

"The disputes concern above all the constituencies in the main urban centres where FLN and FIS candidates are competing in

the run-off," APS said.

Premier Sidahmed Ghazali has alleged that the first-round elections were flawed by irregularities.

Mr. Ghazali, who orchestrated the country's first free legislative voting since independence in 1962, said in a television interview Sunday that the elections "were not as free and clean as I would have liked."

The voting Dec. 26 was marred by scattered FIS intimidation, Mr. Ghazali said.

More serious were the failure of officials to distribute 900,000 voter identification cards needed to cast ballots, and the one million ballots made void because they were improperly filled out, Mr. Ghazali said.

"What happened was somewhat of a disappointment to what we hoped for," Mr. Ghazali said.

It was the first time since the vote that Mr. Ghazali acknowledged serious irregularities.

In Sidon, Lebanon, pro-Iranian Muslim fundamentalists have hailed the FIS victory in Algeria.

Some 600 of the Iranian-backed Islamic Coalition Organisation, made up of Sunnis and Shiites, held a rally of support for FIS.

About 20 sheikhs also took part in the gathering at the Zafari mosque in the port city of Sidon, South Lebanon's provincial capital, 40 kilometres from Beirut.

"I consider what happened a great accomplishment," said Sheikh Abbas Musawi, leader of the pro-Iranian fundamentalist Hizbollah, in a speech at the mosque.

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Possible Lockerbie moves worry Libya—politician

EDINBURGH (Agencies) — Libya is deeply concerned that Britain or the United States may retaliate for its refusal to extradite two men accused of destroying a Pan Am aircraft over Lockerbie, a Scottish politician said.

Labour member of parliament Tam Dalyell said a high-ranking Libyan foreign ministry official telephoned him at his home near Edinburgh Sunday to express concern.

"Libya had no part in the bombing but certain other countries in the Middle East had," Mr. Dalyell quoted Abdullah Bibas as saying.

Mr. Dalyell said Mr. Bibas, who heads the European section at the ministry, said that even if it were to be proved the two Libyans had been involved in planting the bomb, it would be found that they could not have been the sole perpetrators.

Mr. Bibas stressed that the Libyan government had no advance knowledge of the plot that killed 270 people — all those aboard the airliner and 11 residents of the small southwest Scotland market town — in December 1988.

Libya most certainly played no part in the disaster, he told Mr. Dalyell.

Mr. Dalyell quoted Mr. Bibas as saying Libya was worried about possible retaliation by the United States or Britain and puzzled by the two countries' absolute refusal to discuss the extradition demand.

"We wish the legal authorities in Scotland and America would meet us to talk about this matter," Mr. Bibas told him.

Mr. Dalyell said he felt it unrealistic for Britain to expect a country with whom it had no diplomatic relations to comply with an official demand to surrender two of its citizens for trial.

He said that after talking to some people who took part in the Scottish police investigation into the blast he was convinced some evidence had been "placed" by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

Mr. Dalyell did not elaborate.

In the past he has said it was difficult to accept the complete exculpation of Syria and Iran, officially regarded as the prime suspects until the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the outbreak of the Gulf war last January. This view is shared by some people in Lockerbie and relatives of those who died.

Mr. Dalyell visited Tripoli at the end of October to discuss Lockerbie with Libyan authorities. He said on Sunday constituency matters

forced him to reject a second invitation but his companion, fellow Labour MP Bernie Grant, had accepted and left for Tripoli earlier Sunday.

Heir to ex-king says army may topple Qadhafi

The heir to the deposed king of Libya was quoted Sunday as saying he believed the Libyan military would soon overthrow the country's leader, Muammar Qadhafi.

"I am convinced that there will be a rebellion and that it will begin with the army, that is, from the heart of the system," Idris Al Senussi was quoted as telling the major Rome daily La Repubblica.

"I say this on the basis of information that I receive each day," Senussi was quoted as saying, without elaboration.

The newspaper said it interviewed the great-grandson of King Idris in Rome, where he is a businessman. The king was deposed in 1969 by army officers led by Colonel Qadhafi. La Repubblica described Senussi as a pretender to the throne.

Senussi also said training camps for Libyan soldiers had been established in the United States, Chad and Kenya to prepare for an overthrow of the Qadhafi government. He gave no details, and it was not possible to immediately reach him for further comment.

There was no independent confirmation of his statements.

The National Front for the Salvation of Libya, the largest opposition group, said recently that 350 of its guerrillas who were resettled in the United States no longer formed part of a fighting group.

The front's force had included over 600 Libyan prisoners of war in Chad who had turned against Libya and been trained in guerrilla tactics by the United States.

However, the group lost its base in the African country when Chadian officers backed by Libya overthrew the pro-U.S. government a year ago.

Libyan experts and Western diplomats in Tripoli say exile groups have largely been ineffective and represent little threat to Col. Qadhafi. Senussi said his brother Ala was following the campaign to overthrow Col. Qadhafi and maintaining contacts with the U.S. government.

Senussi said he was not demanding to return to Libya as king, but added that Libyans were anxious to have one.



Sultan Qaboos

Qaboos to develop shura council

MUSCAT, Oman (AP) — The Majlis Al Shura, the Sultanate's new consultative council, ended its first session this weekend amid indications that Sultan Qaboos is to develop this Islamic style of parliament a little further in the future.

Majlis President Abdullah Al Qatadi closed the session Sunday, declaring the council's establishment to be "a curtain raiser for a new era of joint national action."

Western diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity, interpreted the remark as an indication that further political reforms were likely on the completion of the majlis's decreed three-year term.

At present, Oman is leading the way among the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states in attempts to introduce greater participation in government.

Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have activated similar majlis. Elders, dignitaries and religious men are named to a shura council to which rulers turn for consultation on important matters.

With the exception of a brief experiment in the early 1970s for Bahrain, Kuwait was the only one of the Gulf Arab nations to boast a Western-style elected parliament, but that was suspended at the height of the Iraq-Iran war. Its revival remains in limbo.

Sultan Qaboos has reigned as absolute monarch since overthrowing his father in 1970. But he is deemed by Western diplomats to be moving step by step towards the formation of a fully elected peoples' assembly.

The 59-member, Muscat-based majlis has a representative for each province of the Sultanate. In each region, sheikhs, elders and men of religion nominated, sometimes through a voting process, three candidates from which the sultan then selected one.

But its sessions, which began Dec. 3, were closed to the public. Western diplomats said they understood the sultan may be considering re-structuring the representation in the majlis for its next term. They expect new constituencies might be established in order that members represent equal numbers.

Due to Oman's population spread and increasing urban drift in the last decade, under the present structure a majlis member from a rural region could be representing 200 people while a member from the capital could represent as many as 20,000 people.

The diplomats said it is possible that Oman may eventually develop a two-tier body similar to that of the British houses of parliament whereby there would be an upper house of non-elected sheikhs and elders, similarly to the British House of Lords, and an elected lower house which would be a continuation of the majlis with increasingly greater powers, rather like the British House of Commons.

Britain wants Algeria to sign nuclear treaty

LONDON (Agencies) — Britain urged Algeria on Monday to sign an international treaty against nuclear proliferation following a report that Iraq had sent nuclear material to the North African country for a possible bomb-making project.

A British official refused to confirm the report in Britain's Sunday Times newspaper but said the Algerian government had given public commitments that its nuclear reactor being built at Ain Oussera, 160 kilometres south of Algiers, would be subject to international safeguards.

"We look to Algeria to abide by this undertaking and invite the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) as soon as possible" to inspect the plant, the official said.

He said China, which is helping Algeria to build the reactor, had given similar assurances.

"We also note Algeria's affirmation of a commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and we urge her to formalise this commitment by acceding to the NPT," the official said.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty, aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear bomb materials, has been signed by more than 140 nations.

The Sunday Times report said Iraq had recently sent nuclear material to Algeria, prompting Western intelligence fears the two countries could produce an atom bomb.

The newspaper said Iraq successfully smuggled out more than 10 tonnes of natural uranium before the first United Nations nuclear inspection teams arrived last May.

It quoted official British sources as saying that Iraq had also sent a team of nuclear scientists to Algeria to work on a reactor that could provide material for the manufacture of two atom bombs every three years.

The report said concern had been heightened by the recent success in Algerian elections of a Muslim fundamentalist party which wants to turn Algeria into an Islamic state.

"Obviously we are concerned about recent political developments in Algeria," the paper quoted a senior Western intelligence official as saying. "This indicates Algeria and Iraq have a common cause. They both want a Muslim bomb."

The Algerian embassy in London declined to comment on the report and there was no immediate official reaction from Algeria or Iraq.

The Sunday Times reported that Western governments had intercepted telephone conversations between senior Iraqi officials in Baghdad in which they described the uranium shipments.

It quoted the sources as saying Iraqi scientists were sent to Algeria to work on a reactor in Algeria that could provide material for two "Nagasaki" size atom bombs every three years.

It quoted unnamed officials as saying the Iraqi technicians may have been working at Algeria's Ain Oussera heavy water reactor, due to begin production next year.

The byproducts of commercial nuclear reactors can be used to make atomic bombs. The Vienna-based IAEA is supposed to assure that fissionable material is not waylaid to bomb programmes from commercial or experimental nuclear reactors.

The Times said a nuclear alliance with Algeria would allow Iraq to bypass the intense scrutiny of the United Nations that followed the Gulf war. Under the terms of the resolutions ending the war, Iraq is supposed to destroy all weapons of mass destruction and terminate Iraq's nuclear programmes.

Israeli health strike resumes, less massive

TEL AVIV (AP) — Staff disrupted health care in 19 public hospitals in central Israel Monday in a second day of protests against government plans to start privatising Israel's socialised health system.

All but emergency surgery was delayed and only vital treatment was provided by an emergency staff. Doctors, who are not participating in the strike, made their regular rounds.

A nationwide 24-hour strike hit 44 public hospitals and 1,200 clinics Sunday. Monday's strike was limited to 19 hospitals and workers threatened to paralyse health services region by region.

The walkout by nurses, lab technicians, dieticians and maintenance workers is over fears that privatisation will cost jobs and create two medical systems, one of the rich and the other for the poor.

The Histadrut, Israel's labour federation, supports the strike. The chief rabbinate called on the workers to return to their jobs, saying the strike violated Jewish law by causing unnecessary suffering and endangering lives, Israel Radio said.

The reform would turn five hospitals into public corporations as the first step in a wider plan to semi-privatise the health system. Government-subsidised services would be retained and private care offered to those who can afford it.

Histadrut chief Yisrael Kessar denounced as "a scandal" Health Minister Ehud Olmert's proposal to let doctors treat patients privately at public hospitals.

Israelis rally ahead of electoral reform vote

TEL AVIV (R) — Hundreds of Israelis demonstrated outside parliament in favour of electoral change on Monday as the parliament began debate on a bill introducing direct elections for the prime minister.

The bill's advocates, fed up the present political system, hope electoral reform will rob small, special interest parties of their vast influence over government policy.

"The prime minister cannot impose any national agenda. The moment he is not responsible to the different groups which keep him in power, he will have much more freedom of decision," said Natan (Anatoly) Sharansky, the former Soviet political prisoner

who attended the demonstration.

The direct elections bill is the result of a massive grassroots movement by frustrated Israelis tired of the wheeling and dealing in coalition-making and parliament. Public opinion polls show about 80 per cent of Israelis favour reform.

The demonstrators, who shouted at arriving members of parliament to support the reform, said the proposed system would make the prime minister accountable to the public and less dependent on his coalition partners for executive decisions.

The prime minister would, however, remain vulnerable to small-party demands to secure a majority in parliament.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Camel smugglers could face death sentence

KHARTOUM (AP) — Sudanese authorities have arrested camel merchants trying to smuggle 1600 animals across the northern border and a senior Sudanese official was reported as saying they may face the death sentence. Muhammad Nuri Hamid, under-secretary of the ministry of commerce, told the state-owned Sudan Al Hadith newspaper in an interview published Sunday that the arrest occurred in the town of Abu Hamad, 500 kilometres north of Khartoum. He said camel drivers were trying to smuggle the beasts to a neighbouring country to the north but did not name that country. The two states bordering Sudan to the north are Egypt and Libya. Mr. Hamid did not say how many people were arrested in this incident but he said they will be charged with sabotaging the national economy which in Sudan is punishable by death or prolonged imprisonment. The government confiscated the camels, he added. Last month, at least four people were arrested while trying to smuggle 900 camels out of the country. They have not been tried yet. Camels are one of Sudan's main exports to Egypt, Libya and the Gulf states. The merchants apparently wanted to evade taxes by smuggling the animals out. Mr. Hamid said a number of inspection posts have been erected in the northern regions of Darfur and Kordofan to curb the illegal activity.

Iranian trade delegation in Bahrain

BAHRAIN (R) — An Iranian delegation is in Bahrain for trade talks and economic cooperation. The Gulf News Agency said the team met Bahrain's Emir Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa and Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa Ben Salman Al Khalifa who praised the new relationship between the two countries. Iran's relations with Gulf Arab states have improved dramatically since the end of the 1980-88 Iraq-Iran war. Tehran's neutrality during Iraq's invasion of Kuwait also helped boost bilateral trade.

Indian family battered to death

DUBAI (AP) — An Indian family of five was found Sunday battered to death, and police suspect the killer was a servant who fled the country. Police sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said they suspected the murderer hammered his victims with a cricket bat. They identified the victims as Ramesh Sagar, 40, his wife Rajini, 38, their children Jayesh, 11, and Iyothi, 13, and Sagar's 70-year-old mother Molaidi Kishenbai. The suspect was identified as Rajiv Bhai Rawar, a servant who had worked at Mr. Sagar's home for 12 years. Mr. Rawar left for Bombay early Sunday, and police suspect he killed the family before leaving. The victims were found in their apartment, each wrapped in a blanket. The Bombay police have been notified and pictures of the suspected murderer were wired to Indian authorities after finding negatives in the family apartment.

9 killed in Turkish bus-truck collision

KAYSERI, Turkey (AP) — A truck collided with a bus Sunday in central Turkey, killing nine people and injuring 27, the semi-official Anatolia news agency said. Two of those injured were in serious condition, the agency said. It said the collision occurred about 50 kilometres east of the provincial centre of Kayseri.

Turkey offers troops to U.N. force

ANKARA (AP) — Turkey has offered to contribute troops to a proposed United Nations peacekeeping force for war-torn Yugoslavia, the Istanbul daily Hurriyet reported. Quoting unidentified foreign ministry officials, the paper said the government had told the United Nations of its readiness to participate in the 10,000-strong force to monitor a ceasefire between the Serb-dominated federal army and Croatian forces. The 15th ceasefire in the conflict was brokered by a U.N. envoy, Cyrus Vance, a former U.S. secretary of state. The conflict began after Croatia and Slovenia declared independence last summer. The move was opposed by the Serb-dominated army, which said the Serbian minority in Croatia would suffer. Muslim Turkey has maintained a close interest in developments in Yugoslavia, where sizeable Muslim communities live in Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnia-Herzegovina's foreign minister, Haris Silajdzic, visited Turkey earlier in the week, and voiced concern about possible armed aggression by Serbia if Yugoslavia continues to disintegrate. Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin told Mr. Silajdzic that the government had not made up its mind about recognising the seceding Yugoslav states.

Delors: Foreign aid to Algeria must continue

PARIS (R) — European Commission President Jacques Delors said Sunday foreign aid to Algeria should continue if Muslim fundamentalists take power but be reviewed if the Islamists crack down on opponents. "We will see what measures they take, but initially I say no," Mr. Delors told French television when asked if French or European Community aid should be cut if Algeria becomes an Islamic republic. Muslim fundamentalists are widely expected to be Algeria's dominant force after the second round of parliamentary elections on Jan. 16. "Obviously if tomorrow we saw the fundamentalists launch which hunts, put thousands of people in prison and ban civil liberties, we would review the (aid) question," Mr. Delors said. "But I will not immediately equate the perspective of an Islamic regime with an absolute ban on cooperation with Algeria..." he said.

Ethnic Turks may vote in Turkey in Bulgarian poll

ANKARA (R) — Ethnic Turks who fled to Turkey from Bulgaria in 1989 may vote in next week's Bulgarian presidential election, a Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman said Monday. About 350,000 ethnic Turks migrated to Turkey in 1989 to escape the forced assimilation policies of the former communist regime led by Todor Zhivkov. About two in three are still here. "The Bulgarians asked if Turkey would object. We told them all Bulgarian citizens in Turkey could freely vote in Bulgarian elections," spokeswoman Filiz Dincmen said. But ethnic Turks seemed unaware they would be able to vote in Turkey. Bulgarian diplomats could not be reached for comment. "This is the first we've heard of it."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:30 Les Tortues Ninja
18:35 Marc et Sophie
19:00 News in French
19:15 Varieties
19:30 News in Arabic
19:45 Evening shade
20:00 Colour in Check
20:15 News in English
20:30 Timus Regained

PRAYER TIMES

05:09 Fajr
06:31 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:40 Dhuhr
14:25 Asr
16:49 Maghrib
18:11 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifeth, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 67440
De in Sale Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 622364
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625363, Tel. 625343
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932
Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy, and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain. Winds will be westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and was rough.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 3/9
Aqaba 4/17
Deserts -1/12
Jordan Valley 5/16

Yesterday's high temperatures: Am-

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

man 7, Aqaba 15. Humidity readings: Amman 66 per cent, Aqaba 27 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Khalid Mu'addi 743500
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim 891256
Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh 736123
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 773336
Al Asena pharmacy 637053
Nairookh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yasouh pharmacy 644945
Shuqran pharmacy 637640

IRBID:
Dr. Radwan Al Saad (—)
Al Shura pharmacy (275825)

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Traffic Police 843402
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661776
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381332
Khaleel Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 642442
Jabal Amman Maternity 642562
Mallat, J. Amn. 626140
Palestine, Shmeisani 641714
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musharraf Hospital 667279
The Islamic, Abdali 6612757

OVERSEAS CALLS

Central Amman Telephone 010230
Abdali Telephone Repairs 623101
Jordan Television 661101
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Company 636361
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International

Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:30 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
06:30 Athens (RJ)
06:55 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
07:55 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
11:00 New York, Frankfurt (RJ)
11:55 Frankfurt, Baghdad (RJ)
19:20 Tripoli (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

19:35 Beirut (ME)
11:05 Bucharest (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:00 Aqaba (RJ)
18:30 London (RJ)
18:40 Tripoli (RJ)
11:00 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
11:10 Belgrade, Madrid (RJ)
11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:45 Rome, Madrid (RJ)
11:50 Geneva, Paris (RJ)
20:30 Jeddah (RJ)
20:35 Dhahran (RJ)
21:15 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
21:15 Damascus (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

18:30 Paris (AF)
06:15 Bucharest (RO)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple 700/700
Banana 400/400
Banana (Mukamas) 590/590
Beans 460/400
Cabbage 180/120
Carrot 220/180
Cauliflower 340/280
Cucumbers (large) 250/200
Cucumbers (small) 600/500
Eggplant 240/180
Garlic 650/550
Grapefruit 900/120
Grapes 900/800
Lemon 160/120
Marrow (large) 180/120
Marrow (small) 350/300
Olives 800/700
Onion 180/120
Onion (dry) 440/280
Pepper (hot) 500/400
Pepper (sweet) 400/350
Potato 350/300
Sage 600/500
Spinach 160/120
Tomato 440/380

هنا مت الامم

King commends citizens for efforts to deal with storm, roads in south still blocked

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday expressed his appreciation of efforts exerted by Jordanian citizens who contributed towards reducing the negative effects of the snowstorm of the past week.

He had been following with deep interest the various efforts of the Jordanian citizens in general and the Armed Forces, the civil defence and public security men in particular, during the bad weather conditions that affected the country, the King said in a message addressed to the nation.

"I was at the same time very happy to see rain and snow falling in Jordan, promising a bumper agricultural season this year," the King added.

The King said he was truly impressed with the sense of responsibility and national belonging on the part of all citizens in dealing with the difficulties caused by the weather conditions and effects on communications, water and electricity supplies.

The King also paid tribute to the efforts of the municipal and

village councils, the public works and those departments in charge of electricity, communications and water supplies. He said he took pride in their performance and their shouldering of responsibility under the difficult circumstances.

The situation in the south was far from being over Monday with roads to villages still blocked and electricity cut off from large sectors. Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) officials had reported that by Tuesday electricity would be restored to most areas of the south. Repair teams were operating under severe conditions, they said.

The snow, lack of normal services and other shortages have prompted the Ministry of Education for the second time in a week to postpone the mid-year tajwidi examinations for 73,176 male and female students.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thagwan Al Hindawi announced that the examinations, which were origi-

nally scheduled for Jan. 2, will not take place Saturday. He said that some of the roads in the south are still blocked with snow, preventing students from reaching the examination halls.

In his announcement, the minister said that instead of starting the examination sessions at 9 a.m., students will start at 10 a.m. The Ministry of Education, which sponsors the examinations, has prepared 971 examination halls for these sessions and enlisted the help of 9,700 teachers to supervise the examinations.

Different community colleges and universities in Jordan had to reschedule their examination dates in view of the current weather conditions and the state of the roads in the Kingdom.

Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzak Tubaishat visited the southern governorate of Karak Monday to inspect ongoing work. The minister first chaired a meeting at the Karak municipality to learn about the situation there and then toured a

number of areas inspecting the condition of roads.

The minister was told that the delay in opening some roads was due to the break-down of road opening machinery. The minister reported that all repair teams were busy restoring water and electricity supplies.

The Karak deputy governor told the minister that the region lacked sufficient machinery to quickly reopen the roads. He noted that priority was being given to main roads.

The Meteorology Department reported Monday that the southern and eastern desert regions will still be affected by the frost and icy roads, making travel almost impossible.

In a statement to the Jordan Times, a department official said very light showers were expected in different areas today with the temperatures dropping to 3° Celsius at night and rising to 9° Celsius during daylight hours. He said that the country was expected to witness sunny weather Wednesday and Thursday.

Senate, Lower House appear headed for collision on Royal Jordanian laws

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A parliamentary deadlock appeared to be in the offing Monday over draft laws on the national carrier, Royal Jordanian (RJ), after the Legal Committee of the Lower House insisted on certain amendments to the legislation which the Upper House (Senate) had sought to reverse, according to parliamentary sources.

The key points on which the two Houses differ involve what is viewed as RJ monopoly over air cargo operations, the appointment of chairman of the RJ board of directors and the airline's freedom to obtain loans without prior government approval.

The amendments proposed by the Legal Committee of the Lower House said foreign air-

lines should be allowed to engage in airfreight operations based in Amman, that any serving minister of transport automatically assume RJ chairmanship and that the national air carrier obtain government approval before obtaining loans.

The draft laws was sent to the Senate last year after the suggested amendments were incorporated by the Lower House. But the amendments were rejected by the Senate and sent back.

The Legal Committee, in meetings held Sunday and Monday, insisted on retaining the amendments and the draft legislation now goes before the Lower House Wednesday.

Under parliamentary statutes, if the House stands by the original amendments, then a joint session of the two Houses will be held to discuss

the issue. The final decision will hinge on a majority vote from among the 120 parliamentarians — 40 from the Upper House and 80 from the Lower House.

In the meantime, the airline remains without a chairman following the resignation of Khalidoun Abu Hassan last year. The airline is also unable to raise large loans to finance its shortcomings, mostly resulting from accumulated losses over the years and the recession in international aviation.

According to industry sources, the revoking of the RJ monopoly on cargo operations is not expected to affect the airline.

"The idea to eliminate what is called RJ monopoly on cargo originated when dozens of companies expressed interest in cargo operations," said one

source. "But it has been proved that the initial enthusiasm diminished when close studies established that such operations for a new entity will not be financially feasible."

RJ sources said no successor to Mr. Abu Hassan was named pending the fate of the legislation in Parliament. Under the original text of the law, the Council of Ministers retains the right to appoint a chairman for the airline, which has been functioning more or less as an autonomous body since its inception.

The draft law on RJ was originally endorsed by the National Consultative Council (NCC), which served as a semi legislative authority in the absence of Parliament between 1978 and 1984. Parliament was suspended in 1974 and was restored in 1984.

Income Tax Department collected JD 93,447,384 in 1991, official says

AMMAN (Petra) — The Income Tax Department in 1991 collected JD 93,447,384, down from JD 114,182,742 in 1990, a decline of 18.16 per cent, according to Department Director General Mansour Haddadin.

He said in a statement Monday that the decline was caused by a drop in the amount of income tax paid by the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) in 1990 due to a decline in exports which was understood to be a result from the Gulf crisis.

In 1990, the JPMC paid income tax amounting to JD 50 million, which dropped last year to JD 16,917,999, Mr. Haddadin said.

The collection of income tax from other sources increased last year by 19.23 per cent compared to 1990, he said.

The 1992 fiscal budget has forecast that JD 104 million will be collected in income tax revenues. The department expects to collect this sum thanks to increased cooperation on the part of tax payers and due to the fact that 24,196 new taxpayers will be added to the list, Mr. Haddadin said.

Mr. Haddadin said that JD 20,144,428 was collected in 1991 from banks and companies, the highest total among the various categories.

In 1992, the Income Tax Department plans to conduct field surveys in all governorates with the intention of adding more taxpayers to its lists, Mr. Haddadin added.

He said that according to the law, taxpayers will be allowed a 6 per cent discount on their income tax if they pay in January, 4 per cent in February and 2 per cent in March.

He said that the department employees have now started a week-long process of distributing forms to be filled by taxpayers, including businesses, merchants and others.

Head of local Red Crescent Society deplores Israeli action

AMMAN (Petra) — National Red Crescent Society (NRCSS) Ahmad Abu Qoura Monday denounced a decision by the Israeli occupation authorities to deport 12 Palestinians from the occupied Arab territories.

Dr. Abu Qoura said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the Israeli occupation authorities are still refusing to implement the Fourth Geneva Convention on protecting people under occupation despite resolutions issued by the U.N. Security Council and the International Committees of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent.

"Despite all the resolutions and appeals, Israel still persists on using repressive measures and is expelling civilians from the territories, thus violating Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention as well as international and humanitarian norms," Dr. Abu Qoura said.

He stressed the need to have an international force to implement resolutions and agreements on the protection of civilians living under occupation.

Higher Health Council services to be upgraded, minister says

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Health Ministry plans to promote the work of the Higher Health Council to expand the base of medical services in Jordan, Health Minister Aref Bataineh said in a statement Monday.

The plan entails offering on-the-job training for doctors and paramedics in order to raise their efficiency and also to better control the quality of medical services offered to the public, the minister said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

At the same time, the Ministry of Health plans to expand the base of beneficiaries of the medical services offered by hospitals and health centres in Jordan, said the minister. Government hospitals and health centres offer beneficiaries free medical treatment and free drugs, and enlist the help of private hospitals to carry out its work.

According to Dr. Bataineh, the ministry has plans to arrange for all types of drugs to be available in the Kingdom at reasonable prices through closer cooperation with private institutions.

To achieve these goals, the ministry is in the process of setting up an executive committee affiliated to the Higher Health Council to follow up the implementation of the council's decisions. The whole project will soon be submitted to the Council



Aref Bataineh

of Ministers for approval, Dr. Bataineh said.

The council, which is entrusted with executing the general health policy in Jordan, groups representatives of the private and public health sectors in Jordan.

Health Ministry hospitals and health centres were especially active during the past snowstorm with particular attention in the southern regions of Jordan, worst hit by the storm, according to Dr. Bataineh. He told Petra that the ministry had made arrangements

by providing staff and drugs as well as food supplies and vehicles to all centres in the south, enabling them to deal with any emergency.

Medical services in the south are reported to be excellent, with all centres opening extra hours to deal with the situation, the minister said. He said the Royal Medical Services of the Armed Forces and the army helicopters were particularly helpful in offering emergency assistance to those hurt from the storm.

Residents in the Wadi Mousa district reported Monday several emergency situations, including the people falling and breaking their legs or arms, women needing dialysis machines and patients with heart troubles. All were transported to Maan by helicopter for treatment.

Residents in the area reported that they still had no electricity, five days after the start of the storm. Without electricity, the petrol station was not functioning and the local bakery was at a standstill, officials said.

The minister of health said that his departments in the south did not register any deaths but the health centres offered medical treatment to people with broken bones, suffered after falling on icy and slippery ground or injured in car accidents.

Muslim pilgrims cross into Jordan on way to Mecca

SOUTH SHUNEH (J.T.) — A group of 1,118 Muslims from Palestinian land occupied since 1948 arrived at south Shuneh Monday on their way to Mecca to perform the lesser pilgrimage.

The group, who crossed the Prince Mohammad Bridge, were housed at the Pilgrims City in south Shuneh as provided for by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs.

Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Sheikh Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi attended a ceremony organized to welcome the pilgrims and conveyed to them greetings and welcome from His Majesty King Hussein. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

The Foreign Ministry's Department for Palestinian Affairs has been taking charge of arrangements for the pilgrims crossing into Jordan assisted by the Public Security Department (PSD).

Department Director Adel Irshid and PSD officers were among a group of officials present at the ceremony.

The pilgrims crossed via the Prince Mohammad Bridge, which is normally assigned for trucks and other vehicles, due to the closure Monday of the King Hussein bridge.

Seminar to discuss commercial applications of solar, wind energy

AMMAN (J.T.) — Under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, chairman of the Higher Council for Science and Technology, an international seminar on the commercialisation of solar and wind energy technologies will be held in Amman starting today.

As part of the joint research, development and demonstration programme of the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), an international seminar was held previously in Amman in 1986 to highlight the potential of solar and wind energy applications in the developing countries, according to a statement from the RSS.

The success of this seminar and the recent developments and progress made in solar and wind energy technologies prompted the organisers to hold a second one, which will concentrate on the commercialisation aspects of solar and wind energy technolo-

gies and the challenges they face. Director of the Renewable Energy Research Centre at the RSS Dr. Rizeq Ta'ani said that the objectives of this seminar include the identification of areas of commercialisation in selecting developing countries for solar thermal applications, photovoltaics, and wind energy.

He added that the seminar will analyse major institutional, legal and technical factors which led to the commercialisation of the existing systems. Moreover, the seminar will discuss major technical, economic, and policy issues and problems facing further commercialisations of solar and wind energy systems, he said.

It will shed light on areas, measures, and means of the transfer of solar energy know-how in the framework of North-South and South-South cooperation, according to the statement. The seminar will encompass the following activities:

— keynote speeches by prominent international decision-makers,

— technical sessions in which papers will be presented and discussed,

— an expert panel discussion, and

— field trips to various solar and wind energy stations in Jordan.

A total of 30 papers by 43 specialists representing 15 countries are to be presented in the seminar, in addition to a keynote paper and five invited papers.

The Organising Committee, consisting of representatives from the RSS, Prof. Dr. Werner Goeth, Franz Diederich of Aachen University of Technology in the Federal Republic of Germany and Eberhard Biermann from GTZ will meet in the period January 4-10, 1992 to evaluate the papers, discuss other related issues pertaining to this seminar and to make the necessary arrangements needed for the success of this seminar.

11 citizens honoured for work in helping juvenile delinquents

AMMAN (J.T.) — A group of 11 citizens were honoured by the Ministry of Social Development Monday for their efforts to contribute solutions to the juvenile delinquency problem in the Kingdom.

The 11 citizens, who include court judges, police officers, social workers and others, had offered proposals and constructive ideas towards resolving issues related to the young through a competition. The competition was organised by the ministry in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, and the Public Security Department (PSD) as well as the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), according to GUVS executive President Abdullah Al Khatib.

He told the Jordan Times that the recommendations, ideas and proposals presented in the competition entitled "The Most Effective Methods in Dealing with Juvenile Delinquency" will be incorporated into a general plan of action to be prepared by a special task force to help deal with the juvenile delinquency issue in Jordan.

The competition aimed at finding the most practical and useful methods to deal with these delinquents, said Dr. Khatib.

Dr. Khatib told the ceremony held on the occasion that GUVS was proposing a series of measures, including guidance to the young, and methods to provide them with protection against vocational training to help them



Abdullah Al Khatib

earn a decent living, he said. Minister of Social Development Dr. Amin Mashqabeh said that ministry surveys have revealed that some youngsters were victims of abuse, assault and inhuman treatment by their own families, neighbours, schools or friends.

For this reason, the Ministry of Social Development has been giving due concern to the question of juvenile delinquency in the country and has organised the competition to enlist the help of specialists in dealing with its adverse effects on the country, Dr. Mashqabeh said.

The minister said that much of the abuse of children was found to be the cause for the young dropping out of school and becoming homeless. The PSD representative at the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Abdul Rahman Al Udwan, made a speech outlining the role of the police in dealing with crimes and delinquents.

Childhood conference to be held

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Planning in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), will hold the National Childhood Conference on Feb. 4, 1992. The two-day conference, which will be held at the Royal Cultural Centre, will discuss working papers dealing with education, health, environment, and information.

Home News in Brief

Educational workshop to be held

AMMAN (Petra) — Under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, a workshop entitled "Let Us Exchange Our Educational Experience" will be held by an educational gathering which groups several private schools on today and Wednesday. Taking part in the workshop are 160 teachers from the National Amman School, Al Ahliya Girls School, Abdul Hameed Sharaf School, Al Manhal School, the National Orthodox School, Al Raed Al Arabi School, Al Bayan School and the University Model Schools. The key address at the opening ceremony will be delivered by president of the Philadelphia University Muhyeddin Touq.

Official to leave for Beirut conference

AMMAN (Petra) — The First Deputy Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Karim Al Dughmi will leave Amman for Beirut Wednesday to take part in the second parliamentary conference on population and development which opens there Thursday. The conference will last for three days.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- * Art exhibition by Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan and Italian ambassador to Jordan Francesco de Courten at Abdul Hameed Sharaf Foundation Gallery.
- * Exhibition of the activities of the Goethe Institute in Amman at the Institute, Jabel Amman.
- * Exhibition of photographs on the subjects of "Glimpses of Jordan" and "People" at the British Council.

VIDEO

- * Documentary series on the various forms of theatre in Germany (parts 4, 5 and 6) at the Goethe Institute — 7 p.m.

Arabiyyat receives Turkish, Russian ambassadors

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyyat received in his office at the Parliament Monday Turkish Ambassador to Jordan Mehmet Ali Irtencelik.

Dr. Arabiyyat and Mr. Irtencelik reviewed relations between Jordan and Turkey as well as the cultural ties tying the two Muslim peoples.

The meeting also reviewed parliamentary relations between the two countries and ways of enhancing them in a manner that could serve the interests of both countries. Dr. Arabiyyat extended an open invitation to a Turkish parliamentary delegation to visit Jordan.

Dr. Arabiyyat also received Russian Ambassador to Jordan Yuri Griadunov and discussed with him parliamentary relations between Jordan and Russia. The two stressed the need to exchange expertise and visits by parliamentary delegations between the two countries.

Mr. Griadunov lauded His Majesty King Hussein's stands on Jordanian-Russian relations.

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DELEGATION SCHEDULE

DUBAI (DUBAI HILTON HOTEL)

4 to 7 January (Exhibition on 5 & 6)

AMMAN (HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL)

7 to 9 January (Exhibition on 8 & 9)

CAIRO (LE MERIDIEN CAIRO)

10 to 14 January (Exhibition on 11 & 12)

Timings: 10.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.

and 5.00 p.m. - 8.00 p.m.

For more details and information contact



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Which way to go?

TUNISIAN PRESIDENT Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali this week urged the Arab foreign ministers meeting in Cairo to consider ways of combating the spread of Muslim fundamentalism. Ben Ali has cause to be alarmed. He has a Muslim insurgency at home and next door in Algeria, where the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) is threatening to dump democracy and establish an Islamic state. But how can Muslim fundamentalism be stemmed?

A study of Muslim history would reveal that fundamentalism has always come forward either as a result of state corruption and weakness or when the Muslim umma (nation) faced foreign threat. These two phenomena exist side by side these days in almost all Arab and Muslim countries.

In comparison, the surge in Muslim fundamentalism in the 1970s, 80s and 90s is in many ways similar to the drive of Arab nationalism in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1950s and the 1960s Arab nationalism and trends of the left were suppressed, sometimes brutally, by the state. So the question is how does Ben Ali propose that Arabs fight Muslim fundamentalism? Being a security man by profession, he most probably would favour confrontation. But would confrontation do? And what are its consequences?

While it is difficult to answer these two questions with any certainty, it must be emphasised that any confrontation with such a popular movement would lead to regression in democratic trends now taking hold in the Arab World. It would also boost their following and drive them underground, as has already happened in Tunisia.

Considering that fundamentalists' grievances are genuine, the only way that fundamentalism can be checked and halted is to address those concerns. This requires the so-called seculars to clean their act, to stem corruption, to improve state functioning, to address economic problems and to divert funds from the military into education, health and social services. Arab states that face fundamentalist threats should not react by the use of force or undemocratic means, they should only react by sincerely addressing the problems from which their societies suffer. These states should remember that they not only use the power of their muscles but that of their intellect. Power is not only in militarism but also in information, education and sound economic and foreign policies. People only follow fundamentalists because they see them as saviours. They would follow anyone who promises a better future.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Monday discussed the Jordanian-Palestinian coordination process with regard to the peace process and said that Amman has lately witnessed a flurry of activity on the part of the Jordanian and Palestinian leaders aimed at concerting the two sides' stands on all fronts. The daily said that the Palestine question is the number one priority for Jordan which is struggling to abort all conspiracies by the Zionist enemy aimed at liquidating the Palestinian rights. Jordan is also seeking coordination with the other Arab parties to the peace negotiations as another step to foil Israel's plots aimed at sabotaging the peace process, the paper continued. The prime minister's meetings with Palestine President Yasser Arafat and Farouk Al Kaddoumi, Jordan's endeavours on all fronts to back the Palestinian people's struggle for freedom and the Arab countries' solidarity with the Palestinians in the face of Israel's atrocities and the expulsion of Arab citizens from their homeland are all clear manifestations of the will and determination to confront the Zionist plot, said the daily. The paper said that Palestine, with all its holy places, should be the concern of all Arab and Islamic countries and Jordan is setting the example to others in its drive to help the Palestinians regain their freedom and liberate their lands. The paper called on all Arab parties to the peace negotiations to exert further efforts towards exposing Israel's manoeuvres designed to abort the peace process and to consolidate its hold on Arab lands.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dastour called on the Arab countries to give up their participation in the peace process, sponsored by the United States, and said that there can be no positive result of such talks. Taber Al Udwan said that the Arabs' participation was aimed at achieving some progress towards ending Israel's occupation of Arab land, but what the Arabs have witnessed is just the opposite result. The writer cited the expulsion of 12 Arab citizens, Washington's success in forcing the United Nations General Assembly to scrap a former resolution equating Zionism with racism and Israel's continued settlement programme, coupled with an escalation of inhuman practices against the Palestinians, as clear signs of Israel's determination to abort the peace process. The writer said that the Arab parties' decision not to go to Washington was a step in the right direction because it is these parties which had experienced Israel's manoeuvres in the first round, with clear signs of its total disregard of the U.N. resolution. The writer said the United States, on which the Arabs count for a settlement is now busy with the coming elections and is facing the Zionist lobby demanding that the U.S. administration offer Israel loan guarantees for housing the Jewish immigrants. He said that the Arabs are in need of a joint strategy with which to deal with the negotiations at any level so as to achieve the aspired goals.

The View from Fourth Circle

Salami-and-cheese diplomacy

By Rami G. Khouri

THE decision by the four principal Arab parties to the Middle East peace negotiations in Washington to postpone their departure for the next round of bilateral talks highlights one of the greatest weaknesses on the Arab side: we have little substantive political or military strength that we can use as leverage in the negotiations. That's the bad news. The good news is that the decision to postpone travelling is an effective tactical move with some positive short-term results, and we seem to be learning the difference between short-term tactics and long-term strategic goals. The postponement is not very impressive or effective in the longer term, though, and it should not be allowed to overwhelm our firm political objectives with emotional excesses.

If we stay away from the talks, we would be playing right into the hands of the Israelis, who would love nothing better than to see the whole negotiating party cancelled. If we go to Washington without any protest, we would be further humiliated. The moment is difficult, and therefore it calls for an extra dose of rationality, and for controlling our natural instinct for emotional over-reaction. We are called upon here to recognise yet again the basic nature of the negotiating process, the political and moral power that we can muster, and the realistic objectives inherent in participating in the talks. We would be foolish and immature to allow a historic opportunity to slip out of our hands because we allowed our hormones to triumph over our brains.

For many years, negativism, denial, and withdrawal have been our main weapon in the political battle against Israel. When we run into something we do not like, we usually go on strike, or we reject it outright without sufficient probing or diplomatic forays. This policy has brought us very little. Effectively, when we strike, we stay away from a diplomatic process, we pull out of the political dynamic, and relegate ourselves to the footnotes of history. The world does not much care if we strike or not. It also seems not to care very much if we show up in Washington or not.

Yet, it is difficult for us simply to ignore the Israeli decision to deport 12 Palestinians, because it highlights a) our vulnerability to Israel's power as an occupier, b) the imbalance in the negotiating posture between the occupier and the occupied, c) the world's indifference to Israeli violations of U.N. resolutions and international law (in sharp contrast here we go again — with the world's emphatic response to Iraq's transgressions in Kuwait), and, d) the docile and seemingly partial role of the United States, the main catalyst in the negotiations.

The PLO and the principal Arab states did a good thing in postponing their travel, because this brought immediate interna-

tional attention to the Israeli practice of deportations, which are in clear violation of international law. Most of the world's powers said this during the past few days, and will confirm it if they have a chance to vote on a resolution in the U.N. Security Council. The move should also impress upon the Americans that Arab patience is not unlimited, and that Washington has to play a more firm and direct role in taming its Israeli friends if it wants to avoid having to send another half a million troops to the Middle East in a few years' time to rescue another country from the throes of Arab anger and mass despair. Clearly, the target of the Arab move is more Washington than Israel. The travel postponement will make little difference to Israel, which will continue with its deportations.

So, we gained some diplomatic attention, which is useful but not decisive. We also scored some points in the self-respect department, which is important but not politically compelling. Having raised the issue, we would do well now to go to Washington and continue the talks, and continue highlighting the deportations there, in front of the world's media, and Israel's paymasters in Washington. The 12 deportees, and some of the others before them, should travel to Washington and stand in front of the White House, erecting tents, waving pictures of Anwar Scharansky and other Russian Jewish immigrants to Israel, and reading out the U.N. resolutions that demand that Israel allow Palestinian deportees to return home. They should shame the United States into appreciating that it pays for Russian Jews to go to Israel while it also pays Israel the money that allows it to deport Palestinians from Palestine. Is this the new world order that George Bush speaks of, or is the biggest salami-and-cheese sandwich that has come out of the American diplomatic kitchen for the last half a century?

The Washington talks are about cumulatively increasing the political pressure on Israel and the United States, to force them to end Israel's aggression against the Palestinians and the other Arabs. We can best do this by remaining deeply engaged in the talks, and by using the talks as a fulcrum around which we tighten the screws against Israel. We entered into the negotiations with a clear long-term objective in mind: to use the power of world public opinion to force Israel to comply with U.N. resolutions and to withdraw from the lands it occupied in 1967. That objective remains valid, and long-term. We did not expect Israel suddenly to reverse its policies simply because the talks started. In fact, we expected the opposite: a hardening of Israeli positions, and more settlements, deportations, and other provocative acts, and this is

precisely what the Israelis have given us. They're very predictable rogues.

Our challenge now is to deal with them in an intelligent and effective manner. That probably means sticking to our original aims and continuing the positive, conciliatory, but affirmative attitude that we first showed at Madrid, i.e. we are here to make peace on the basis of international law and legitimacy and we will continue pushing in this direction until we achieve our aims. We will not be sidetracked by the provocations of Israel, the dilly-dallying of the United States, or the emotionalism of our own demeaned Arab character.

It strikes me as rather peculiar that after Israel has deported nearly 2,000 Palestinians during the past 24 years, that we should suddenly take particular offence and shoot ourselves in the foot because 12 more are being deported. The deportations are illegal, painful, cruel, and humiliating. We know that very well. We know about Israel's transgressions and illegal acts, but by using our traditional tactics we have been unable in the last quarter century to change Israeli policies. The deportations are not new. Our response to them, however, should be new and different, if it is to be more effective.

The peace talks offer a fresh opportunity to force Israel to change its ways, perhaps even to withdraw from the occupied territories. We knew that we were taking a chance when we entered the talks, and we knew there were no guarantees of success. As we run into short-term frustrations today, we must not allow them to disrupt our long-term strategy for regaining Arab rights and stopping the aggressions of an expansionist Zionist entity. Having engaged in the peace talks, we are morally obligated to the memory of our grandparents and the future of our children to see them through, to give them every possible chance to succeed. If they do not succeed, then we can go back home, load our guns, sharpen our knives, and once again prepare to fight, to suffer, and to die — because every other peaceful option would have been tried and found lacking. Seventy days after the start of the Madrid talks, we have not yet reached that point.

If a cruel and fickle world wants to force feed us salami-and-cheese sandwiches, we should tell them that we would rather starve with dignity than gorge ourselves on humiliation. But we should tell them that across the negotiating table, where they can see the fire in our eyes, the integrity in our spirit, the depth of our national identity and the determination of our political consciousness.

Israeli moves undermine hopes for peace in 1992

By Jack Redden
Reuters

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's decision to ignore U.S. warnings and expel a dozen Palestinians from Israeli-occupied territory banished hopes of an easy route to Middle East peace in 1992.

Mr. Shamir, looking to the election he must call this year, has chosen to display his right wing credentials rather than please Washington and secure the \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees Israel wants to pay for Soviet immigration.

"The highest obligation, with the highest priority ... is to fight the political battle for the safeguarding, security and wholeness of the land of Israel," he told his Likud Party shortly before the end of 1991.

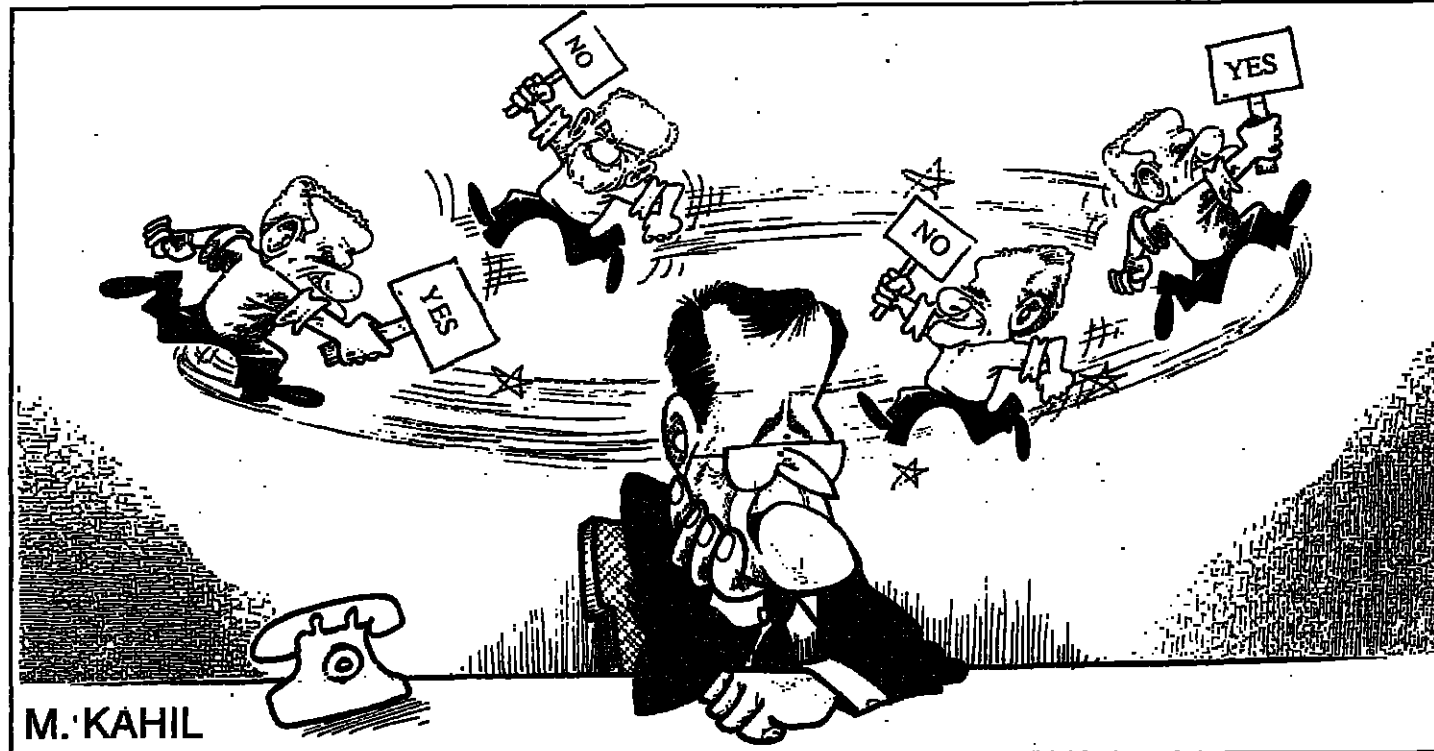
That speech, widely seen as the start of his reelection campaign, was followed by allocating extra money for Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The government started 1992 with the announcement that 12 Palestinian nationalists would be expelled in reprisal for the shooting dead of a Jewish settler.

Each step was directly counter to U.S. policy.

Washington believes a settlement to the 43-year-old state of war between Israel and Arab countries can be reached only with Israel exchanging Arab land captured in the 1967 war for an Arab guarantee of peace.

The plans for extra spending on



settlements to make such a withdrawal more difficult drew immediate criticism from Washington, which regards the rapidly rising population of Jews in the disputed areas — now up to 100,000 — as a major obstacle to peace.

And the decision to expel Palestinians for the first time in eight months, knowing it would be condemned as a breach of international law, could only sour the Middle East peace talks in which Washington has invested

so much time and prestige.

All Arab delegations have signalled their protest by postponing their return to Washington for the next session scheduled on Tuesday. Israel says it will attend but Washington will see Mr. Shamir as causing the latest complication.

U.S. President George Bush has the leverage to pressure Israel, above all Washington's overwhelming position as bank-roller to a country that shows no

signs of curbing its appetite for living beyond its means.

It not only gives the Jewish state at least three billion dollars in direct grants each year — more than four billion dollars in 1991 — but is being asked to underwrite a sharp increase in Israeli borrowing.

Later this month Israel wants the U.S. Congress to guarantee \$10 billion in loans it seeks to raise over the next five years to fund immigration from the collapsed Soviet empire.

Mr. Shamir's continuing rejection of U.S. wishes make the loans increasingly uncertain. Most Israeli officials now expect at best a year-by-year allocation of guarantees, and that hedged by tougher conditions.

However, Mr. Shamir's apparent willingness to jeopardise these loans — already allocated to help cover Israel's bloated budget deficit — indicates how far he is prepared to place territorial ambitions above the fears of

those struggling with the economy.

As Israel heads for an election that could come any time up till November, Washington can anticipate further demonstrations of Mr. Shamir's long-standing commitment never to surrender any captured land.

At the same time, the United States will be preoccupied with its own presidential election. With U.S. domestic issues likely to dominate that campaign, Mr. Bush will not be focusing on Middle East peace talks that can win few votes.

The U.S. election will bring the calendar to November — a month beyond the one-year goal Washington originally set for completion of arrangements on Palestinian autonomy.

In the meantime, Israel is likely to have spent half a billion dollars on new settlement in the occupied territories, creating fresh obstacles to the land-for-peace compromise Washington considers vital.

Israel will also probably still be led by Mr. Shamir, 76, who is now ensuring he will not be outflanked on the right by small, ultra-nationalist parties, while to the left he faces the feuding, fading Labour Party.

If he steps down, the leading contender to succeed him is his defence minister, Moshe Arens. Since Mr. Arens ordered the expulsion of the 12 Palestinians — and issued a Shamir-style vow not to yield to pressure — no one would expect a softening of Israel's positions.

Intifada — year four

By E. Yaghi

ON Dec. 8, 1987, near a congested checkpoint at the entry to the Gaza Strip, an incident occurred that sparked the genesis of the intifada. An Israeli truck struck and killed four Palestinians: a doctor, an engineer and two workers and wounded seven others. Many such incidents had taken place during the twenty years of Israeli occupation of Arab lands taken after the 1967 war, but this time a revolt swept across the Gaza Strip like wildfire, jumped over Israeli-occupied territory to the West Bank and set in motion a blaze of nationalist resistance that still continues. The Arabic word, "intifada" has become part of the vocabulary of the international community.

On Dec. 9, the same year, Palestinian youths in Jabalia refugee camp threw stones at Israeli soldiers in an open truck. Shots were fired by the troops, killing 17-year-old Hatem Abu Sisi whose funeral led to a raging demonstration. On Dec. 10, another camp in the strip rose up, then two camps in the West Bank until the entire Arab population joined in. Each stone thrown was an answer to the long years that Palestinians were denied their national rights and made refugees in their own land. The uprising explodes from an entire population for whom the Israeli regime has proved to be a continuous nightmare of physical and psychological torture. The humiliations and oppression of the past have engendered a level of defiance of the odds, above all among the "occupation generation."

The "children of the stones" are youth: who have challenged the Israeli army with nothing but stones and courage. In the first days of the intifada, there was no Palestinian army in the West Bank and Gaza and so stones were the only weapons available to resist the Israel Defence Forces (IDF). Throwing stones became the norm, symbol and the image of the intifada.

It is not astounding that the intifada began at all, but that it did not begin earlier. More than half the population in the West Bank and Gaza grew up knowing nothing but Israeli occupation. The intifada is important historically because of its duration, depth, scope and unifying character and commitment to the creation of political and socio-economic resistance to occupation. It was the youth who were born during the occupation and knew no better life who decided they could no longer stand their oppression. The uprising is one of the most

remarkable events in modern history. It is not only a social revolution, but a courageous struggle against Israeli repression. The intifada has brought new hope for challenging the occupation and since the declaration of the independent state of Palestine on Nov. 15, 1988, Palestinians have had hope that one day they will be free of the Israelis.

However bravely the intifada began, the Israelis quickly moved with violent and vicious acts to quell it. During the first months of intifada, there were thousands of casualties. No insurrection has ever yielded such constant calculations: civilian casualties, curfews, demolition of houses and children killed and hurt. To date, since the beginning of the intifada, over 1,300 Palestinians of all ages have died, tens of thousands have been wounded, some permanently disabled and many more thousands have been imprisoned, almost all without trial. Since 1967, more than 300,000 Palestinian men, women and children have been imprisoned in Israeli jails at one time or another. This represents one fifth of the population and is a phenomenon unmatched even in Nazi-occupied Europe.

Between 25,000-31,000 children have been seriously injured during the uprising by

live ammunition and high velocity bullets, plastic and rubber bullets, teargas and beatings. A further 10,000 children have been detained for more than a week.

Prisoners are held in conditions of severe overcrowding. Many are detained without charges or trial. Access to lawyers are indefinitely denied. Hundreds of curfews have been imposed causing grave hardships. The pattern of increasingly barbaric punishments and a complete absence of civil liberties doesn't fit the behaviour of the "only democracy in the Middle East."

At first, the intifada was spontaneous and unorganised. But after about one month, efforts made to organise took root and thus a political control affected the uprising and it is this that allows the intifada to continue. Existing grassroots organisations inside occupied Palestine quickly mobilised their resources to respond to new challenges posed every day. Their leaders met to assess and try to answer the needs of the population. Now every sector of the Palestinian population participates in the revolt. Local branches of the PLO emerged to play a more public role. Branches of the PLO have joined local orga-

nisations to form the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU).

The UNLU remains underground although Israelis have claimed to have destroyed the leadership; it has regular communication with the Palestinians. This is seen by leaflets which suddenly appear about every two weeks throughout the West Bank and Gaza. Each leaflet outlines specific tasks for each day of the coming period. This includes days for complete strikes, protests over conditions of prisoners in administrative detention, which days to work the land and so on.

During daily challenges to the occupation, it is the young "shebab" who are the shock absorbers of the Palestinians and who pay the heaviest price. The resistance committees evolved like other sectors of the uprising, from spontaneous formation in response to immediate needs to a more formal and coordinated structure. Local resistance groups have managed to construct a sophisticated network of resistance committees on city-wide, regional and national levels. The "children of the stones" are part of a larger process. Their stones and slingshots are catalysts for far-reaching changes within Palestinian life.

There is a new democracy springing up from within Palestine with respect to how each person participates and contributes to the uprising.

The intifada has educated the Palestinians and demonstrated its people's surprising capacity to sacrifice. The real character of the intifada is that it's a creative political force, the courageous expression of a whole people's determination to "shake off" their occupation. It has given Palestinians self-reliance and an extraordinary level of unity across class, sex, geographic, occupation and age lines. The message of the intifada is clear: the Palestinians assert their presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and their persistence to not only stay, but claim their right to self-determination and to establish a Palestinian state against all odds.

If the peace conferences that so far have taken place in Madrid and Washington and are yet to take place succeed, then the intifada will be known as the catalyst for the possibility of such success taking place. If the peace conferences fail, the Palestinians will still continue to resist occupation until they win their freedom, their own state and recognition of being an independent and autonomous people.

Intifada

Fate of peace talks hinges on U.N.

(Continued from page 1)

"Our position will be based on the reaction to the three elements," he told reporters.

"We would like to see something more than condemnation. We would like to see real steps," he said.

Mr. Hussein said the Israeli expulsion decision constituted a "destructive policy" following since a long time to ruin the peace process.

He said the expulsion would have a negative influence on the peace process.

"We cannot continue to respond to the U.S. stand, calling on us not to give Israel a chance to quit the negotiations," he said.

He urged the U.S. to take a solid stand on Israeli practices in the occupied territories.

Unless Israel gives up its present policies, the current Israeli practices are bound to adversely affect the bilateral as well as the multilateral talks, Mr. Hussein said.

He said that Jordanian-Palestinian coordination with regard to the peace process was being conducted at the highest level and the two sides were pursuing the right course.

Mr. Hussein also said that the Arab countries reaction to Israel's expulsion decision reflected the high level of coordination among them to deal with the situation.

Dr. Ahmad Al Yazigi, who is accompanying Mr. Hussein on the visit, said that they were

together making a month-long tour of Sweden, Japan, China and Britain at the invitation of the governments of these countries.

During the tour, Mr. Hussein and Dr. Yazigi will explain the Palestine issue and the Palestinian people's struggle for independence and an end to occupation. Dr. Yazigi said that the tour was aimed also at explaining the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) stand and that of the Palestinian people with regard to the peace process.

Mr. Hussein and Dr. Yazigi, who is a member of the Palestine Guidance Committee, will leave Amman Tuesday on their way to Stockholm.

Palestinian delegates said they would likely attend the Washington talks if the Security Council strongly condemns the Israeli expulsion decision.

But having postponed their departure in protest at the expulsion orders, they were unlikely to arrive in time for the opening session, originally set for Tuesday.

"If the Security Council passes a resolution that goes beyond previous ones, this could help us decide to go," said delegate Ghassan Khatib, from Ramallah in the occupied West Bank.

Mr. Khatib indicated to the Associated Press in an interview conducted in the occupied West Bank that the Palestinians wanted the Security Council to go beyond past condemnations and take measures to force Israel to reverse Thursday's expulsion orders.

Israel has rejected appeals to reverse the orders, despite outcry at home and abroad and the decision by all the Arab negotiating delegations to suspend their departure for Washington.

"There is no room for debate about this," Defence Minister Moshe Arens said Sunday.

The Israelis say the 12 helped foment the attacks that have killed four Israeli settlers in the occupied territories since the peace talks were launched in October.

"The fact that Israel is able to take steps like expelling and to continue building settlements during the negotiations raises serious questions on whether these talks can lead to anything like Israeli withdrawal or any solution to the problem," Mr. Khatib was quoted as saying by Reuters.

"This case is very important because it is linked to Israel's true intentions towards the peace process," said Mr. Khatib.

Delegates say that they have not made an issue of Israel's month-long curfew on some 60,000 Palestinians in the West Bank, new land confiscations and other measures but that they cannot ignore the expulsions.

"This is an obstacle we cannot jump over. If the U.S. knows this is a trap, it should not allow Shamir to set up any traps in the future," said Saeb Erekat, another delegate.

On Sunday, families of the Arabs facing expulsion criticised the Palestinian delegates and said they do not represent them.

"We should be able to achieve something that people can feel practically, otherwise our people will lose faith in this process," Mr. Khatib warned.

Shamir defends expulsion decision

(Continued from page 1)

quoted Mr. Shamir as saying. Mr. Shamir denied Jewish settlers, who lobbied for extra funding and demanded expulsions in reprisal for the killing of four Israelis in the occupied territories since October, dictated government policy.

As proof, Mr. Shamir told reporters Israeli negotiators were mandated to discuss autonomy arrangements with the Palestinians despite a threat by two

hawkish cabinet ministers to resign if such talks begin.

"Of course they have a mandate to speak about autonomy or self-government or interim arrangements," Mr. Shamir said.

Minister without Portfolio Rehavam Zeevi called autonomy a "doomed idea." He said he and Science Minister Yuval Neeman would quit the government if it instructed its negotiators to discuss autonomy with the Palestinians.

Mr. Shamir said that the peace conference, he said, was serving to "expose the truth of the Israeli claims and their evasiveness in face of a comprehensive and just peace whose principles have been endorsed by the international community."

Mr. Sharon said: "The rulers of Israel would be mistaken if they thought we took part in the peace process on basis of their distorted views of peace and their fallacies about continuing their occupation."

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Arafat returns

(Continued from page 1)

"We hope international legitimacy will once more affirm its will and implement its resolutions on the Palestinian case and the Arab-Israeli conflict as it did over the Iraqi aggression of Kuwait," said Prince Saud.

Saudi Arabia has been an influential player behind the scene in the peacemaking process started after the Gulf war.

Riyadh is ready for participation in the multilateral stage of wider peace issues with Israel if it makes progress with the Arabs directly concerned with the Middle East.

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By Khadija Al Muhaisen

IT is amazing how fast children learn. From the scientific point of view, Dr. David B. Doake in his paper "Learning to be literate in Arabic: Needs and New Directions," states that by the age of four or five children would have mastered most of the elements of their spoken language.

The problem for us, in the Arab World, begins here. Since our spoken Arabic differs substantially from our written, classical Arabic, many encounter great difficulty when learning the classical language at schools. This also accounts for the numerous mistakes even an educated speaker would make, especially when giving an unprepared speech.

Dr. Doake feels that it is up to the parents, on the one hand, and the teachers, on the other, to provide to the child the right conditions for natural learning of the classical language. One way of overcoming the difficulty of naturally learning the classical language is by promoting reading.

Miss Margo Malatjalian, of the Friends of Children Club, is fervently active in this field. The Friends of Children Club, established in 1974, is a non-profit voluntary organisation concerned with and totally dedicated to the development of the cultural, educational, and other needs of children in Jordan. The club's main aim is to encourage and promote reading-related activities, creative art and craft skills, physical fitness, and other related activities.

"The club has geared its objective towards adopting a project that would promote reading in Jordan. We have adopted the idea of 'reading begins at birth', and we are moving towards achieving that," explains Miss Malatjalian.

The club has been following up the development of reading in kindergartens for almost five years now. It has been training and lecturing kindergarten teachers all over the country. It

has already published its first "big book" in the Arab World. The book aims at helping teachers develop reading skills amongst children. At the moment, the club is trying to introduce suitable books to be read to and by children and even encouraging teachers and children to write their own simple stories.

Perhaps the most noteworthy project Miss Malatjalian is busy carrying out is the publication of children's books. She explains: "This is mostly a team work. Local experts, as well as Iraqi artists, are closely working with kindergarten teachers and educated parents to learn more about the needs of children in this age-group (day one till eight years of age)." She then adds: "Books at our schools basically teach children individual words, out of context and meaning, which bear little or no importance to the child. All they do is drill alphabets and words into the child's head. The textbooks taught to children are far from what they feel and think. They mean nothing to them. What we need is to teach our child through a story of meaningful sentences, accompanied by colourful illustrations."

Reading bed-time stories to children is not very common in this part of the world. It is hoped that, especially with the publication of the new children's book, this will become a daily routine. It is important for the child to be read to in his

Reading begins at birth

mother tongue, in our case the classical Arabic. Working mothers can record stories with their own voices in tapes and play them to their child right before bed. Fathers are encouraged to do the same. The older child can read to the younger one. Preparatory and secondary school students should read to the younger ones, especially in areas where illiteracy rate is high among parents.

Miss Malatjalian is working on forming the national committee for promoting reading. This will be a non-profit organisation. It aims at inspiring children to read. It also aims at making good books available for children at free or nominal prices, especially in less fortunate areas.

"Books should be subsidised like sugar and rice! People should value reading as a national investment."

"The first word to come down to Prophet Mohammad from God was 'read,'" explains Miss Malatjalian. "And this is exactly what we should be doing. One day, we are going to wake up and find ourselves a great reading nation, ready to conquer the world with our knowledge."

"And who else to start with but our beloved young ones?"

The writer is studying English literature and business at the University of Jordan.

Although reading begins at birth, experts say, it is never too late to practice the reading skills (file photo)

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How do children learn to read?

By Colin Hughes

NO ONE knows how we learn to read. It follows that no one really knows the "correct" method of teaching children.

That fact, however, does not prevent education experts, psychologists, advocates of "common-sense" solutions, and almost anyone else, from delivering with total conviction their belief that one method or another is best. The debate becomes more confusing when methods of teaching are confused with controversy over which materials to use.

The "real books" (or "whole books") approach to reading means simply that the teacher uses the kind of story book you might buy in a bookshop. Some teachers — very few, and possibly none at all — are alleged to have concluded that this approach means that children learn to read simply by reading that they do not need any training in reading skills, and therefore need no help. All they need to do is live in

a "reading environment," where they are left to pick up books and acquire reading just as they acquire speech.

But that is not what the "real books" approach actually means. It really means that "real books" are preferred to graded reading schemes, such as the Janet and John books through which many of today's parents learn to read. A lot of teachers found that children were bored by graded schemes; that is why they now like using "real books."

But most schools still use graded schemes, and many use a mixture of them. Publishers have improved their schemes enormously in recent years, so that the stories are much more interesting than they were 10 to 20 years ago.

Good schools hedge their bets: they use graded schemes, but also encourage children to choose their own "real books." Either way, the children need to be helped and encouraged to read —

not just story books, but all kinds of text. Most importantly, they need to understand what they read.

The second area of controversy is over method rather than materials. The method now regarded as traditional, but actually comparatively modern, is "phonics" — still widely used. At its simplest, phonics means saying "C-A-T spells cat." It becomes more complex, moving up in difficulty of words and sounds to teach letter combinations.

There are two main objections to phonics. One is that a combination of reading schemes and phonics means that children learn words in artificial steps rather than in natural contexts: they move from C-A-T to C-A-R-T to C-H-A-R-T, and so on, with books designed to introduce words as each phonic combination is learnt. The second objection is that hundreds of English words do not conform to phonic rules.

No one has ever been able to prove (or disprove) that teaching children "phonics" actually teaches them to read. But most experienced teachers are confident that some phonic clues help children to decode words when they are learning how to read.

The other main method is "look and say" — sometimes called the "whole word" method, and therefore often confused with "whole books" materials. In simple terms, "look and say" means that children learn by seeing a whole word many, many times. They become familiar with its shape, and connect that shape to other, similar words.

Flashcards are sometimes used to help children learn in this way: a picture of a cat is connected with the word "cat" and repeated many times, or pinned up around a classroom. Many children are taught using sentence-makers: words, or parts of words, are given to the child on cards, and the child strings together simple

sentences by putting the bits of text together.

One reason for thinking children learn by remembering whole words is that, as adults, we usually read by looking at sections of text: we do not read each individual letter, or break up words into combinations of letters — we simply come to know the shapes of words, and even phrases.

The sensible interim attitude, at least as far as lay parents are concerned, is to accept that children learn to read in a variety of different ways, and that no single child learns to read in any one way. Children may learn in different ways at different times.

The best thing that parents can do is to encourage interest and enjoyment in reading all kinds of text — from story books to advertisements, cereal packets to comics, science books to zoo guides. The most important thing to avoid is putting children off by creating too much pressure — The Independent.

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Financial Markets

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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close
Sterling Pound	1.5490	1.8639
Deutsche Mark	1.4530	1.5357
Swiss Franc	1.3748	1.3644
French Franc	5.2675	5.2045
Japanese Yen	124.65	124.30
European Currency Unit	1.3195	1.3348

USD Per STG

European Opening 11:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.18	4.06	4.06	4.18
Sterling Pound	10.43	10.50	10.50	10.50
Deutsche Mark	9.37	9.43	9.56	9.56
Swiss Franc	7.81	8.00	8.00	7.93
French Franc	10.12	10.06	9.93	9.79
Japanese Yen	5.31	5.25	5.09	4.93
European Currency Unit	10.25	10.25	10.31	10.00

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	349.75	6.40	Silver	5.92	.085

21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6760	0.6780
Sterling Pound	1.2551	1.2614
Deutsche Mark	0.4395	0.4417
Swiss Franc	0.4940	0.4965
French Franc	0.1268	0.1294
Japanese Yen	0.5457	0.5464
Dutch Guilder	0.3402	0.3422
Swedish krona	0.1204	0.1210
Italian Lira	0.0582	0.0585
Belgian Franc	0.02132	0.02143

Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7640	1.7720
Lebanese Lira	0.1765	0.0771
Saudi Riyal	0.7799	0.1806
Kuwaiti Dinar	—	—
Qatari Riyal	0.1832	0.1840
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7305	1.7390
UAE Dirham	0.1832	0.1840
Greek Drachma	0.0331	0.0383
Cypriot Pound	1.5270	1.5370

Per 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	4/1/1992 Close	5/1/1992 Close
All-Share	131.43	131.32
Banking Sector	108.04	108.14
Insurance Sector	130.24	130.56
Industry Sector	146.00	145.63
Services Sector	146.21	145.57

December 11, 1991 108

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One Sterling	1.8685/95	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1459/64	Canadian dollar
	1.5230/40	Deutschmarks
	1.7175/85	Dutch guilders
	1.3572/79	Swiss francs
	31.36/40	Belgian francs
	5.2070/2120	French francs
	1150/1151	Italian lire
	124.60/70	Japanese yen
	5.5625/75	Swedish crowns
	6.0050/0100	Norwegian crowns
	5.9380/9430	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	351.15/351.65	U.S. dollars

It's hot out there ... at the AFM

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The atmosphere could have been that of the summer days at the trading hall of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) last month despite the cold December weather which should have dampened the trading floor or even made it slippery.

Unexpectedly, December 1991 was a record month since the AFM was set up in 1978 as trading in shares and stocks reached about JD 53 million during that month alone.

Dr. Umayya Toukan, the new general manager of the AFM, told a news conference Monday that the December volume helped to lift the gloom of the first half of last year and bring up the total volume for 1991 to over JD 300 million, an increase of 10 per cent over the total figure of 1990.

Another indicator of the 1991 strength, Dr. Toukan said, was the rise in the average of share prices by more than 20 per cent. He also mentioned a third high score, that of recording JD 56 million in subscriptions to new share or stock flotations at the primary market in 1991.

To those looking for accurate statistics, Dr. Toukan revealed the following figures:

1) The total trading at the secondary market amounted to JD 320,287,101, up 10.5 per cent

from the 1990 total which stood at JD 289,815,340.

2) The daily average, calculated over 246 days of trading in the year, amounted to JD 1,231,026, compared to JD 1,084,218 during 1990 when working days were 248.

3) The increase in the number of shares traded was 18.9 per cent over the number in 1990 when the total reached 136,054,317 shares. At the end of 1991 the total climbed to 161,775,101 shares.

4) The daily average of shares traded stood at 657,622 last year compared to 548,606 in 1990.

5) The daily average of contracts concluded totalled 746 compared to 634 in 1990; that means a total of 183,425 contracts were signed in 1991, an increase of 17.5 per cent over the 157,129 total of the previous year.

6) Stocks of all categories traded last year amounted to JD 1,448,874, marking a 53.6 per cent decline from a high of JD 3,121,014 registered in the previous year. The drop obviously covered the number of stocks which fell from 198,926 to 119,924.

Transactions which were excluded from floor trading, such as those involving hereditary, family or non-resident entities, amounted to 3,488,789 shares, worth JD 16,005,830, compared

to 5,556,762 shares worth JD 17,808,353 in 1990.

Stock transaction conducted outside the trading floor totalled 12,701 in 1991, worth JD 127,010, compared to 13,266 stocks, worth JD 132,660, in the previous year.

The shares of industries registered the highest volume in trading as it captured 60.5 per cent of the overall total, or JD 183,169,359. Shares of banks and financial companies were far behind, making it to the second place though, with a JD 75,520,452 volume, representing 24.9 per cent. Services and insurance shares were lower at JD 39,348,006 and JD 4,794,580 respectively at 13 per cent and 1.6 per cent of the overall volume.

At the end of last year, the prices of shares were reflected in the general price index which stood at 147.2 points compared to the 1990 closing index of 118.4 points. However, the price index per sector showed that the financial shares were the least to gain (11.7 points), topped by service company shares (21.4 points), insurance shares (33.3 points) and industry shares in the first place, with a 49.8 points gain.

Improvement was noticeable at the primary market where, Dr. Toukan said, share flotation in 1991 amounted to JD 56,467,568 compared to JD 38,478,065 floated in 1990. He pointed out that during last year, three public shareholding companies were set

up with a combined capital of JD 10 million and that five other public shareholding companies increased their capital by offering 5,617,568 shares worth JD 8,467,568.

During 1990, only one public shareholding company, with a JD 8.1 million capital, was set up and three other companies raised their capital by offering 1,318,710 shares to the public for JD 2,378,065.

No stocks were issued at the primary market last year, according to Dr. Toukan, who noted that there was one debenture offering in 1990 for JD 6 million.

Development bonds issued by the Central Bank on behalf of the government amounted to JD 38 million through four issuances while in 1990 four issuances were offered for JD 22 million.

The Gulf war in January 1991 had a terrible impact on share trading at the AFM where only a total of JD 5,852,240 was registered in volume compared to JD 64,194,772 in January 1990. The volume diminished further in February 1991 to JD 4,132,487.

Volume picked up in March and steadily increased through May when it reached JD 45.9 million. In June, a decline started again that stretched through September when a JD 13.9 million trading volume was recorded. A rise crept back in later months.

In terms of number of shares traded, the Gulf war pushed



Umayya Toukan

When will non-Arabs be able to freely trade at the AFM?

down the number from 32.7 million in January 1990 to 2.5 million in January 1991 and from 14.8 million in February 1990 to only 1.7 million shares in 1991.

Similarly, the number of contracts signed shrunk by 83.7 and 79.3 per cent for the two months of January and February.

In an important appendix, the AFM showed that total trading in the secondary market, since 1978 until 1991, amounted to JD 2,215.2 million while the total at the primary market reached JD 780.6 million.

Dr. Toukan, a knowledgeable stock market person who assumed his job in November last year, puts great emphasis on modernising the rules and regulations that govern the functions of the stock market in Jordan. He said that many guidelines and measures in force now were outmoded and some were unnecessary.

He expressed hope to be able to advance the AFM functions by introducing new instruments to consolidate national savings, attract more capital and expand

investments.

In addition, Dr. Toukan said he was planning to enlarge and update the role of brokers and the framework of channelling vital and needed information to potential investors.

The head of the Brokers Association elaborated by mentioning the returns from the Gulf and the funds that have flooded the market from their investments. He credited the lower interest rates being offered overseas and the stability in Jordan for the high demand on shares at the AFM.

Dr. Toukan spoke highly of the institutions which steered the Kingdom to recovery from the past turbulent years and was especially appreciative of the Central Bank management for its leading role.

Dr. Toukan, while answering many questions from the press, directed one to the prime minister for an answer: "When will Jordan allow non-Arabs to invest in Jordanian shares freely, without even the 'routine' approval of the prime minister?"

Kuwait said planning to spend \$10 billion for war costs in 1992

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Kuwait expects to spend more than \$10 billion on Gulf war-related expenses in the current budget year, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) reported Monday.

The newsletter, published in Nicosia, said the figure was contained in a delayed budget plan for the year that has been drawn up but not yet officially released.

The plan, which covers the budget year beginning July 1, 1991, includes regular government expenditure of \$20.99 billion — a 67 per cent increase on the previous year, which was interrupted by the Iraqi invasion.

Another \$300 million was set aside to go into Kuwait's Reserve Fund for Future Generations, designed to tide the emirate over after oil runs out.

Revenues are expected to be \$3 billion — mostly from oil sales — leaving a deficit of \$18.29 billion, MEES reported. But the revenue figures traditionally don't include earnings from Kuwait's considerable overseas investments.

In previous years these were enough to swing the published deficit into surplus, but that will not be the case this year. That's because the deficit is larger and investment revenues were sharply reduced as Kuwait liquidated in-

vestments to cover payments to the multinational forces, the newsletter wrote.

Extraordinary items related to the war, most of them non-recurring, have been placed in an off-balance-sheet item totalling \$10.28 billion, the newsletter wrote.

By far the biggest item is \$7.31 billion for payments made during 1991-2 toward the cost of Operation Desert Storm. The second-largest item is \$1.34 billion to write off the consumer loans of Kuwaitis.

In the regular budget plan, the item showing the most spectacular increase is defence expenditure, which jumps 488 per cent over the previous year, to \$9.11 billion. The previous figure was \$1.55 billion.

Kuwait's cabinet instructed ministries to keep expenditures to 80 per cent of the 1990-1 figure when drawing up their budgets. Many ministries stayed close to the target with the exception of the finance and defense ministries, MEES reported.

The cabinet also asked ministries to cut their non-Kuwaiti labour force to only 35 per cent of the pre-invasion total. This led to considerable savings in labour costs, despite wage increases for Kuwaiti employees, the newsletter wrote.

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Oman's stock market flourishes

MUSCAT, Oman (AP) — The value of shares on the Muscat Securities Market rose to 574 million riyals (\$1.5 billion) in 1991 and a projected increase in trading is expected to make 1992 another boom year, the market's director-general said Sunday.

"The actual volume of trading has surpassed expectations by leaps and bounds and there is clearly remarkable confidence in the market which makes us extremely optimistic about the future," Mahmoud Jarwani told the Associated Press.

When the market was established in 1989, the value of shares totalled 378 million riyals (\$995 million).

Mr. Jarwani said many factors influenced the rise in investment in the sultanate following years of

recession caused by low oil prices in the 1980's, the 1980-88 Iraqi war and the 1990 Gulf crisis precipitated by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

"The public can see that oil prices are stabilising and that the market will not face a 1986-type crisis," he said, referring to the oil price crash of that year. "They are therefore willing to put their money into new sector development."

He said: "It is also generally recognised that today there are investment risks all around the world and crises in stock markets abroad. People therefore want to invest at home where they can also watch share movements at first hand."

The market presently has 53,000 registered shareholders

compared to 17,000 when it was first set up. The number of publicly-held and closed joint stock companies has risen from 73 to 81 over the same period.

Paid-up capital increased from 259 million riyals (\$681 million) to 293 million riyals (\$771 million), he said.

Oman's stock market has been able to boost market capitalisation through its primary and secondary markets, Mr. Jarwani said, noting that in the last 2½ years, it succeeded in launching new issues through the primary market, valued at more than 32 million riyals (\$84 million), out of which 21 million riyals (\$55 million) came from shares of seven

new joint stock companies.

The rest came from "established companies that had opportunities to increase their capital under the stock market's prosperity," he said.

Aggregate trading volume in the secondary market has exceeded 100 million riyals (\$265 million), he said. Channels for investment included a public trusts fund issue by authorised local investment companies.

Mr. Jarwani said the stock market also provided background information and data to enable "investors of different sizes to make the right investment decisions."

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Bush presses N. Korea on nuclear inspections

SEOUL (R) — President George Bush looked forward Monday to the healing of the "last wound of the cold war" but urged Communist North Korea in the meantime to live up to its pledges to renounce nuclear weapons.

Mr. Bush and South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo told a news conference they would cancel an annual "Team Spirit" joint military exercise if the North allowed inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"If North Korea fulfills its obligations and takes steps to implement the inspection agreements, then President Roh and I are prepared to forgo the Team Spirit exercise for this year," Mr. Bush said.

A South Korean Foreign Ministry official said Pyongyang was expected to sign a nuclear safeguards accord requiring inspections by Saturday at the latest. U.S. officials were also optimistic but more cautious.

Mr. Bush stressed U.S. support for peace efforts on the divided peninsula and noted that rapid progress had been made.

"My friends, the day will come when this last wound of the cold war struggle will heal," he said in the speech to South Korea's National Assembly. "Korea will be whole again."

He said the United States shares "your goal of peaceful reunification on terms acceptable to the Korean people."

"North Korea's pursuit of nuclear arms stands as the single greatest source of danger to peace in North East Asia," he said.

Afterwards Mr. Bush travelled by helicopter to Camp Casey, a U.S. military installation 32 kilometres north of Seoul, to visit American forces within artillery range of the Korean demilitarized zone (DMZ).

The United States, which leads a United Nations alliance which fought off a Northern and Chinese invasion in the 1950-53 Korean War, still has 39,000 troops here.

"We stand here just a few miles from the DMZ, a relic of the cold war, tragically separating one people," said Mr. Bush, who donned a field jacket to address 3,000 cheering soldiers.

"History's verdict is in," he continued. "On one side stands one of the fastest developing countries in the world and on the other side, a failed regime that produces only misery."

Referring to the reduction of U.S. military involvement here, Mr. Bush said American forces would "gradually shift to a supporting role as the Korean military takes the lead in defence of their nation."

"But North Korea must know that we will resist any aggression and we will keep our forces strong enough to defend the international ideals of freedom."

National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft told reporters the United States had offered a "modest upgrade" in the present low-level dialogue with North Korea but Pyongyang had initially rebuffed the offer.

"We're not about to take some end run around our staunch ally in order to accommodate (North Korean leader) Kim Il-Sung. And if he doesn't want it, so much the better. That just suits the heck out of us," Mr. Bush said when reporters asked him to elaborate on Mr. Scowcroft's disclosure.

Mr. Roh said he would not object to the North taking to Washington on an upgraded basis if the nuclear question were resolved first.

Mr. Bush and Mr. Roh, united on security, were divided on trade issues. Mr. Roh said he could not now agree to lift protection on South Korea's rice industry. Rice farmers fear cheap foreign rice would put them out of business.

"Because of our particular situation, it will be exceedingly difficult to open our markets in the immediate future," Mr. Roh said.

Mr. Bush was burnt in effigy Monday in several small protests by angry farmers throughout South Korea.

Mr. Roh said he supported a successful conclusion to the international trade talks under the Uruguay round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Meanwhile, a welfare organisation in South Korea is hoping to use President Bush's visit to focus attention on the plight of a "lost" group shunned by society.

They are the 1,000 or so officially listed as Amerasians — offspring of U.S. servicemen stationed here since the 1950-53 Korean War.

Besieged Georgian president flees capital, reaches Azerbaijan

TBILISI, Georgia (AP) — President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, his loyalists providing cover with heavy gunfire, fled the capital with his forces before dawn Monday after a bloody two-week siege by opposition fighters.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia was reported to have reached neighbouring Azerbaijan. That republic's Turan News Agency said he was seeking asylum in an unspecified foreign country.

Rebel leaders claimed they let Mr. Gamsakhurdia escape from his stronghold under Tbilisi's parliament building and said they would attempt to form a civilian coalition government that could call new elections as early as April.

"We said we were leaving them an exit on purpose, so that they could leave without bloodshed," a rebel leader, Dzhaba Ioseliani, told reporters.

By an overwhelming margin, Mr. Gamsakhurdia became the former Soviet republic's first popularly elected president in May. Rebel leaders say he then became a dictator, jailing opponents and closing down critical newspapers.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia's flight following a heavy rebel pounding of the parliament building Sunday with rockets and machine-gun fire.

Sources said the president was persuaded to abandon his stronghold through an elaborate plot devised by the man he appointed Sunday to command his troops.

Turan said 12 cars carrying the president, his family and supporters arrived Monday morning in Gyandzha, Azerbaijan, 160 kilometres southeast of Tbilisi.

Tengiz Nurdzhia, an official at the Georgian mission in Moscow, said the president took with him an undetermined amount of rubles, refusing to confirm a report by the Interfax News Agency that Mr. Gamsakhurdia had 700 million rubles.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia's group left government house at 3:30 a.m. (0130 GMT) in military vehicles and buses, his troops firing steadily at rebel positions.

The president had taken refuge in the building with an estimated 300 to 500 loyalists when fighting broke out on Dec. 22. At least 73 people have been killed and 400 wounded in the struggle.

Mr. Ioseliani estimated that 1,200 people were inside the parliament building before Mr. Gamsakhurdia and his supporters fled. He estimated the overall death toll at more than 80.

Mr. Ioseliani claimed the military council that overthrew Mr. Gamsakhurdia was in control of the republic and would demand his extradition.

He also welcomed participation in a new government by former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. Mr. Gamsakhurdia had often been critical of Mr. Shevardnadze, whom some have mentioned as a possible successor to Mr. Gamsakhurdia.

There was no sign of fighting in the capital Monday morning, but fire broke out in the parliament building about six hours after Mr. Gamsakhurdia's departure. The blaze engulfed one wing of the building, where the president took refuge with an estimated 300

to 500 loyalists when fighting broke out on Dec. 22.

Some opposition fighters fired their weapons into the air in apparent celebration. Others carried bottles of liquor out of government house to a table where they were pouring drinks.

A huge cloud of black smoke rose over the burning wing of government house and the wide avenue in front of the building was littered with abandoned cars and other debris of the siege, which claimed at least 73 lives and left some 400 wounded.

The parliament building was heavily damaged, with holes in the wall from rockets and shells. Much of the city centre was laid to waste by the fighting.

On Sunday, Mr. Gamsakhurdia proposed a U.N.-supervised referendum on demand he resign and defiantly indicated he planned to stay and fight.

But Nodar Georgadze, the newly appointed commander of the president's troops, persuaded him to leave, sources said.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia had arrested Mr. Georgadze, a former deputy defence minister, on Dec. 29 after he and other former government officials met with rebels to discuss the country's crisis. He was jailed in government house.

Georgadze heads the Georgian Union of Veterans of the Afghanistan War.

With his colleagues, he hatched the plan to persuade Mr. Gamsakhurdia to flee and the details were worked out through an intermediary who was allowed to visit Mr. Georgadze in jail.

Georgadze said he had met with Mr. Gamsakhurdia late Sunday and early Monday and urged him to "take a reasonable step."

He would not comment further on the sources' accounts.

Mr. Georgadze, unshaven and wearing dark glasses over eyes swollen by three sleepless nights, said he did not believe Mr. Gamsakhurdia's flight would put an end to Georgia's fighting.

"Tomorrow or the day after, this unknown direction will show its worth," he said.

Georgia and the three Baltic states are the only former Soviet republics that have not joined the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia told reporters Sunday that he was not opposed to joining the commonwealth, whose leaders want Georgia to first resolve its civil war.

into south east Bangladesh to escape alleged persecution by the Burmese army.

Burma believes rebels fighting for an independent homeland in its western Muslim-majority Arakan state get most of their support from Burmese refugees in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh officials say more than 40,000 Muslims reached Bangladesh last year and another 1,000 entered the country Sunday. Unofficial estimates put the number at more than 55,000.

Bangladesh officials near the border said Monday the refugees had seen Burmese troops landing at bases along the border, helicopters flying low over hills and naval boats.

The Bangladesh News Agency (BSS) quoted the refugees as saying that soldiers forcibly took away eight Muslim girls aged up to 14 from Maungdaw town to a military camp on Jan. 1 and none had returned.

They said more than 5,000 Muslim youths had been arrested recently and many were feared killed.

Dhaka is hopeful about early repatriation of the refugees, the Foreign Ministry official said, but they would not be forced out in haste. "We must see that they can return home with honour and dignity and with adequate assurances of security."

Bangladesh's ambassador to Rangoon met the Burmese Foreign Minister Monday and will talk to the interior minister on Tuesday to try to normalise relations.

Relations between Dhaka and Rangoon worsened after thousands of Burmese Muslims, called Rohingyas, started fleeing

from both sides met on Dec. 31 in the Burmese town of Maungdaw. They were trying to reduce tension along the 270-kilometre frontier after Burmese troops attacked a camp of the Bangladesh Rifles 10 days earlier, killing one soldier and wounding three.

A resident of nearby Rezapura village was killed and five were injured by a bomb believed planted by the attackers.

Burma said the attack was a mistake while troops were chasing Muslim rebels. It denied it had massed at least 25,000 regular troops along the frontier, a buildup which triggered a military alert in Bangladesh.

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Truce holds despite 84 minor violations

BELGRADE (AP) — The latest ceasefire in Yugoslavia's savage war was holding Monday despite what a Croatian commander called "minor violations" and a bizarre incident in which Croatian forces reportedly fired at their fellow troops.

U.N. special envoy Cyrus Vance indicated in New York Sunday that up to 10,000 peacekeepers could be deployed, now that a truce appears to have halted the carnage of a six-month-old war that has killed thousands and left more than 600,000 people refugees.

The New York Times reported in Monday editions that some 50 advance peacekeepers would be sent to Yugoslavia as soon as possible.

Reports from the Belgrade-based news agency Tanjug and Croatian media indicated guns were mostly silent along the 600-kilometre crescent-shaped Croatian front Monday.

The day before, Croatian forces lobbed shells at Vinkovci, an east Croatian town that saw some of the fiercest fighting of the war, Tanjug said, quoting federal army sources.

In a subsequent report, Tanjug claimed the Croatian forces were "firing at themselves" in what it dubbed "a naive imitation of an attack (by Serbians) on Vinkovci."

The army refrained from firing back in accordance with the terms of the ceasefire, Tanjug said. But Croatian radio reported Monday that in isolated incidents Croatian positions came under shelling in the besieged southern port of Dubrovnik and Vinkovci.

Sunday's incident reportedly occurred as federal army and Croatian commanders in Vinkovci met European Community monitors to negotiate establishing telephone links and other measures that should ensure they talk rather than fight if the ceasefire is breached.

Col. Imra Agotic, commander of the Croatian National Guard, said after talks Sunday with the federal army that there had been "84 minor incidents" in the first 36 hours of the ceasefire. But he stressed: "We can be satisfied so far."

The truce took effect Friday at 6 p.m. (1700 GMT) after all sides assured Mr. Vance they wanted peace and negotiated a ceasefire agreement in his presence.

Croatians reacted to the lull in fighting with skepticism but hope. "People in Sisak do not believe

in the truce until the army withdraws from the Banja region, because we have the front-line only three kilometres away," said Julije Katancevic, 31, from the Croatian town, 50 kilometres southwest of Zagreb.

"The town is much destroyed. People are now fixing what they couldn't do during the shooting — buying bricks, glass, tiles, but there is a shortage of them all," she added.

The major players in the war appear to have decided it is time to halt the slaughter and destruction before they run into military stalemate or the war spreads to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

That republic has Serb, Croat and Slavic Muslim populations. Most observers agree that any war in Bosnia would be much more brutal than the conflict that erupted after Croatia declared independence last June 25.

Even if U.N. peacekeepers are deployed, many problems will remain.

There are increasing signs of dissension in the Serb camp. On Saturday, Milan Babic, self-styled president of the Serb-proclaimed Republic of Krajina in western Croatia, rejected the deployment of U.N. peacekeepers.

Mr. Babic is the leader of Krajina Serbs, who started the revolt against Croatian President Franjo Tudjman in August 1990.

His objections derailed Mr. Vance's efforts in December to get a truce in place. It seems unlikely the United Nations would agree to send a full-fledged peacekeeping force until Mr. Babic either reverses his stand or loses influence.

On Sunday, another group of Serbs, from Bosnia and Croatia, declared their unhappiness with the proclamation last Friday of a new, smaller, Serb-dominated Yugoslavia.

"We do not accept the obstinate idea of 'all Serbs in a single state,' which cost the Serbian and other peoples a great number of dead and enormous destruction of property," the group said in a statement published by the Belgrade daily Borba.

"The Serbian people in Croatia has had enough of war, invalids and graves," a leader of the group, Dusan Zelenbaba, was quoted as saying.

Serbian irregulars and Serb-dominated federal forces control about one-third of Croatia's territory.

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Salvadoran rebel leaders began consultations with the U.N. envoy on El Salvador in the start of the final phase of peace accords.

Negotiators for the Salvadoran government and the rebels, who have been fighting a civil war for 12 years that has killed more than 75,000 people, had been scheduled to resume the final phase of peace negotiations Sunday.

But government representatives did not appear at Sunday's talks.

They were expected to arrive in New York Sunday night and to appear at the United Nations Monday morning.

Instead, the rebels of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) began consultations with U.N. envoy Alvaro Soto, discussing their proposals for resolving remaining issues between the rebels and the government of the central American nation.

Rebel spokesman Roberto Canas said the Salvadoran government owed the world an explanation for failing to appear for the talks.

"We want to make known that the government owes an explanation to the country and the international community for not being here," he told reporters shortly after the rebel leaders arrived Sunday afternoon.

Rebel numbers had dropped 40 per cent to little more than 15,000 men at the end of 1991, from 26,000 in mid-1988 when the military launched a nationwide anti-insurgency campaign, he said.

The number of rebel-influenced villages dropped to 3,700 at the end of 1991 from 8,000 in 1988.

He said Muslim separatist rebels, though still numbering 20,000, were demoralised and incapable of mobilising a massive force to engage government troops.

The Moro National Liberation Front has been fighting since 1972 for Muslim independence in the south.

The threat from right-wing army rebels, who have launched six coup attempts against President Corason Aquino, had also diminished with the surrender of 18 rebel officers last year, Gen. Abadía said.

He said only 10 dissident officers, including coup leader cashiered Colonel Gregorio Honasan, were still in hiding and incapable of attempting to overthrow the government.

Gen. Abadía reiterated the military would be neutral in the May 11 presidential election and squelched speculation he might launch a coup if the polls were marred by massive cheating.

"I can swear by the grave of my mother that I will not stage a coup," Gen. Abadía said.

The collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe had left local rebels "without a footing to proceed with the insurgency," Gen. Abadía told a news conference.

"The Communist insurgency has suffered significant setbacks both in terms of its ideological underpinnings and combat in the past year," he said.

Arturo Tolentino, who ran as Marcos' vice president in the 1986 election, said "there will be no consensus" for Mrs. Marcos as presidential candidate of the Nacionalista Party and invited her to join a party convention

COLUMN 80000

Sentries demand more pay, leave prison unguarded

DHAKA (AP) — About 700 prison guards at Bangladesh's biggest jail left 30,000 prisoners unguarded Monday as they joined a two-hour national strike for higher pay, officials said. About 6,000 guards in Bangladesh's 76 prisons have protested daily since Wednesday, demanding a 75-taka (\$2) hike in their 975-taka (\$26) monthly pay. The guards want to be paid as much as Bangladesh's 80,000 policemen, who receive about 1,050 takas (\$28) per month. The guards at the 30,000-inmate Dhaka Central Jail protested peacefully for two hours before returning to work. No escapes were reported. Protests were also organised in other jails in the country but details were not available, said a prison official, speaking on condition of anonymity. He said no violence was reported. The guards have refused to accept their pay for December.

Gunman surrenders in nude after 4-hour standoff

HUNTINGTON BEACH, California (AP) — A man who shot at police officers then haled up in his apartment for four hours Sunday ended the standoff by surrendering in the nude, an official said. "He walked out unannounced wearing nothing but a baseball cap," Lt. Ed McElrain said. "He was holding a white towel above his head." Kent L. Maynard, 40, was booked for investigation of attempted murder of a police officer and for shooting at an inhabited dwelling. He was being held on \$250,000 bail. Officers went to the apartment before dawn after a man believed to be Maynard called police to report a kidnapping, McElrain said. As they approached the building, the gunman fired several rounds from a shotgun and pistol at the officers, who returned fire. McElrain said. He said the gunman also shot at an uninhabited home next door and an apartment building across an alley.

Indonesia's former first lady arrested

ASPEN, Colorado (AP) — Indonesia's former first lady, Rana Sari Dewi Sukarno, was arrested at the posh Aspen Club Lodge after allegedly slashing another party guest with a champagne glass, authorities said. Police chief John Goodwin said Sukarno, the 51-year-old widow of Indonesia's first president, was charged with second-degree assault and released from Pitkin County Jail on \$5,000 bond. The alleged incident occurred Thursday night during a dinner party at the lodge. Scott Davidson, the lodge's marketing director, said party guests included Ivana Trump, Elle Macpherson and Barbara Streisand. Aspen Valley Hospital identified the victim as Victoria M. Osment, 43, of New York City. She was released Friday after receiving 37 stitches in her face, Goodwin said.

Lost ball returned after 78 years

SMITH CENTRE, Kansas (AP) — A little girl's lost ball was returned as a Christmas present after 78 years. "When I opened the package — my eyesight isn't very good — and I said, 'oh, what is this?'" said 86-year-old Mildred Lambert. "But then, I saw what it was, and I had to shed some tears." Mildred was just 8 when her mother died and an aunt and uncle took her in. The couple was building an addition to their house, but before the two parts were connected, a space gaped in the floor between old and new. One day, Mildred was playing with the red, blue and yellow baseball-sized toy when it bounced, irretrievable, into the crack. "It's very vivid in my mind, even now," she said, recalling that day in 1913. "Playing things were so scarce at that time." When she heard the house would be razed, she went back several times to look but couldn't find it. That's because her daughter, Sharon Lambert, called the owner who found it for her. "I've had some nice (presents), but that one's a treasure," she said.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Bomb devastates Belfast city centre

BELFAST (R) — A 600-pound (270-kg) IRA car bomb exploded in Belfast Sunday night, devastating scores of offices and slightly injuring about a dozen security force personnel trying to evacuate the area, police said. It was the fourth major bomb attack on the city centre within two months by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) which has stepped up what it calls "economic warfare" in the fight to oust Britain from Northern Ireland. "Damage was substantial. It was a miracle there weren't worse casualties," a police spokesman said after the bomb exploded outside an office block skyscraper. It was hidden in a hijacked van.

Baltics call for troop withdrawal

TALLINN, Estonia (AP) — The three Baltic republics have demanded the immediate withdrawal of all Soviet troops from their capitals, an Estonian official said. In their first joint appeal to the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Baltic presidents also called on the leaders of the eleven republics to pull out their own citizens serving in the former Soviet army in the Baltics. The appeal was signed by Presidents Arnold Ruutel of Estonia, Anatolijs Gorbunov of Latvia and Vytautas Landsbergis of Lithuania, after a meeting of the Baltic Council in Jurmata near the Latvian capital of Riga. The appeal also urged that Soviet military hardware be left behind to be used for by the Baltic states for the creation of their own defence forces, the TASS News Agency reported.

China establishes ties with Kyrgyzstan

PEKING (R) — China announced Monday it had established full diplomatic relations with Kyrgyzstan, giving it formal ties with all the former Soviet republics on its sensitive border. The two sides signed a joint communique in the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek, Sunday, the New China News Agency said. China had already established relations with Russia, which borders it to the north, and Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, which with Kyrgyzstan border it on the north west. Peking has announced full diplomatic relations with Ukraine and Uzbekistan, and is working hard to establish ties with the remaining members of Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia.

German aid seized by Russian criminals

BONN (R) — Huge quantities of food and medicine sent to Russia from Germany have been stolen by gangs of criminals and soldiers or left lying in warehouses, an aid group and a radio station reported Monday. Rupert Neudeck, head of the Cap Anamur aid organisation, said packages destined for pensioners, the sick and handicapped were being misappropriated as soon as they arrived in Russia and sold in the black market at inflated prices. "There are two greedy octopuses covering the whole of Russia with their tentacles and their huge stomachs — the old Soviet army and the new mafia, which is made up of hundreds of thousands of parasitic party functionaries," he told Die Welt newspaper. Germany, the most generous Western backer of the former Soviet Union, has donated thousands of tonnes of food and medicine in the last few months. North German Radio said only 10,000 out of 80,000 aid packages shipped to St. Petersburg by one German charity in November and December had been distributed to the needy. Around 30,000 were still in unopened containers in the harbour or in the warehouses. It said the city's Deputy Mayor Pavel Soloyanov was unable to account for the remaining 40,000 packages quoted him as saying some had "gone missing."

U.S. panel urges nuclear cuts

WASHINGTON (R) — A military advisory panel has urged the Bush administration to respond to the breakup of the Soviet Union by roughly halving the U.S. arsenal of strategic nuclear weapons, the Washington Post reported Monday. It also recommended that the United States draw up a plan for targeting nuclear and non-nuclear weapons at "every reasonable adversary" according to the newspaper. The Post said it had obtained a copy of a 44-page report by the panel of current and former Pentagon officials that said Washington should adopt "a new nuclear posture" involving fewer strategic weapons than now deployed to deter a massive Soviet attack. This means substantial reductions below the levels permitted by a 1991 arms treaty with Moscow. The report suggested that the United States target roughly 5,000 nuclear weapons at potential foes in the next few years. It said the U.S. arsenal should remain larger than the total number of British, French and Chinese nuclear arms. A 5,000-warhead arsenal would be 4,000 fewer than allowed by last year's Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, now awaiting Senate ratification. The panel, known as the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff Advisory Group, recommended a radical shift in targeting, the Post said.

Politician: Mrs. Marcos should not seek presidency

MANILA (Agencies) — A prominent supporter of the late President Ferdinand Marcos urged his widow Imelda Monday to abandon her presidential aspirations and support President Corason Aquino's estranged cousin in next May's election.

"We love the first lady," Rep. Rodolfo Albano said in a television interview. "But because of the number of cases she is facing, I pity her. She won't be able to ward off all these attacks."

Mrs. Marcos has been charged with more than